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LIFE OF THE EMPEROR FREDERICK







THE EMPEROR FREDERICK.  
*After the painting by Franz von Lenbach.*

# LIFE OF THE EMPEROR FREDERICK

EDITED FROM THE GERMAN  
OF  
MARGARETHA VON POSCHINGER

WITH AN INTRODUCTION  
BY  
SIDNEY WHITMAN



*WITH A PORTRAIT*

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## INTRODUCTION

THE German original\* of this work has taken several years to complete, and its last and most important instalment will be issued in Berlin simultaneously with this single-volume English edition.

My task has consisted principally in selecting from the mass of material such portions as seemed most likely to interest English readers, and in eliminating as far as possible all second-hand comment and appreciation.† The views expressed and judgments passed are, of course, in nearly every case those of the speaker.

It would be difficult to over-estimate the value of the material here gathered together, the greater part of which will be entirely new to the English reader. The story is told either by the Emperor's contemporaries and co-workers or by official documents of unquestionable authenticity. The attempt is made for the first time to describe the part the late Emperor took in the political shaping of affairs, throwing entirely new light on several important historical events. Even more pregnant is the weighty

\* 'Kaiser Friedrich.' In neuer quellenmässiger Darstellung von Margaretha von Poschinger. Berlin: Rich. Schroeder. Bände I.-III., 1898-1900.

† I am indebted to Captain Gellibrand, 3rd Manchester Regiment, for his valuable assistance in connection with the many military terms which abound throughout the book.

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testimony rendered to his great military capacity by no less an authority than his still living, distinguished companion-in-arms, Field-Marshal Count Blumenthal. The Emperor's own opinions are given, sometimes in the form of letters, sometimes in public speeches, and in both forms of address he was singularly felicitous.

The contents of the volume include conversations, letters, and personalia of monarchs, soldiers, savants, statesmen, and men of letters, during the last half of the nineteenth century. A letter from Goethe, the aged seer of Weimar, whose words still catch the echoes of the eighteenth century, with its powdered wigs, its battlefields of Rossbach and Leuthen, welcomes the birth of the future Emperor, whose death is still fresh and poignant in our memory.

The Emperor's outward bearing is faithfully rendered in Lenbach's beautiful portrait. Dignity and benevolence are alike reflected in that manly countenance, over which seems cast a ray of enthusiasm for all that is noble. The expression of his blue eyes is said, by those who saw him in the plenitude of health and vigour, to have possessed a strange fascination, akin, perhaps, to that which gleamed from the eyes of Othello into the dreaming imagination of Desdemona's.

Born in an age of commerce and industry, amid the whirr of the loom, the throb of the printing-press, the Prince grew into manhood under the influence of modern ideas. Like a Viking of old, he crossed the sea to win the hand of a Sea-Queen's daughter. A man of exquisite sensibility, above all a lover of peace, we find him next in a Northern camp, taking his share—at first one without direct responsibility—in vic-

torious warfare. Thence, almost on the morrow, he is in the South, himself leading the van and carrying the day. And then, at the perihelion of his earthly course, now Westward bound—another Ariovistus, with his fair-bearded, blue-eyed Suevi—he crosses the Rhine to meet the challenge of the old Latin rival of the Teuton. Surrounded by the flower of his race—tall, broad-shouldered men, magnificent in their virility—the Crown Prince appears, just such another “*blonde Reckengestalt*.” And here, again, he reaps the laurel of victory, not in hate or contempt of the foe, but, rather, after the manner of brave men, in honour and respect for his opponents. For they, too, though vanquished, have done their duty—ever the noblest achievement of manhood. Nor had the enemy, even in the throes of defeat, anything of slander or of hate for the Crown Prince. His career moves under the blood-red sunset of a dying chivalry.

And what a time was this, in which a royal Prince, with such a military record, in such a unique position of honour and glory, did not monopolize the world's stage, was, indeed, only one in a cluster of stars! ‘Verily, Germania, thou didst well to tread warily, for fear of the envy of the gods.’

But, alas! the Fates were not to be propitiated. Less than twenty years later, Germany, still under the spell of the most fortunate of her many rulers, was destined to mourn the untimely loss of one who, dying in the very prime of life, must be held, both for himself and his country, doubly unfortunate.

On the pinnacle of martial renown, in the full enjoyment of perfect family happiness, and of an amount of personal popularity rarely vouchsafed to anybody,

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the element of tragedy already shadowed his path. In the words of the Prussian historian, Heinrich von Treitschke, 'He became the victim of the wonderful greatness of his father, and therein lay his tragic destiny.' Distinguished in war beyond all but the greatest, such glory possessed few charms for him. 'I detest this butchery,' he sadly remarked on the morrow of victory; 'I have never longed for war laurels, and would willingly have left such fame to others without envying them. Yet it is just my fate to be led from one war to another, and from battlefield to battlefield, before I ascend the throne of my ancestors. It is a hard lot.' His one ambition was to work as a ruler for the welfare of his people. And here, alas! his efforts were foredoomed to sterility. An ardent champion of Liberalism, he lived to witness its eclipse in nearly every European State, and at his death thankfully accepted for his son the loyalty of the great man whom during his life he had so often opposed as the enemy of his political faith. An opponent of capital punishment, he yet signed the death-warrant of his father's would-be assassin, and in these 'returns upon himself' he won his hardest and most honourable battles.

Long years in the fulness of vigour, which, according to human probability, he might well have expected to spend on the throne, he was forced to pass as Heir-Apparent in comparative inactivity. This period he endeavoured to fructify, in conjunction with his consort, by furthering all kinds of benevolent undertakings and by promoting the cultural interests of the German people. It is largely owing to his initiative that the splendidly successful excavations of Pergamos

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and Olympia were undertaken by the Prussian Government, and the divine Hermes of Praxiteles was restored to new life.

Many of the treasured ideals of the Germans were embodied in the person of the Emperor Frederick, and among these none was more insistent than the perennial yearning for the South and its culture. He was often in Italy and loved to be there. In that country, where so many of his imperial predecessors had met an adverse fate, he, too, was destined, by the operation of an inscrutable decree, to pass the long days and nights of his martyrdom. At San Remo the German doctors first pronounced his malady incurable.

It is impossible to regard the Emperor Frederick's fate without attempting to forecast his course of action, had he been spared to rule over the German people. 'Believe me,' said his old companion-in-arms to the writer, 'if the Emperor Frederick had lived, he would have contented everybody but those extreme sections of society which it is impossible to please, *for—he never thought of himself.*'

Whether the time has come when an unselfish gospel of benevolence, promulgated from a throne, could effect a cure for some of the ills of human society must still remain an open question. The answer which might have been given in this instance is buried in the grave. But there are positive indications that the Emperor Frederick would have filled his high position worthily.

It is universally admitted that his conduct of affairs during the Regency of 1878 was in every way exemplary. Again, during his short reign there was nothing to show that he would have broken with those traditions, the steadfast adherence to which,

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under the leadership of genius, has been the making of modern Germany. As a champion of tolerance the Emperor Frederick was naturally opposed to every arbitrary exercise of power. But this by no means implies that he would have been blind to the machinations of those who, seeing the mote in their neighbour's eye, are conveniently oblivious of the beam in their own. By his lifelong contact with the Prussian aristocracy he was able to gauge their human limitations and shortcomings. In dealing with those he was less intimately acquainted with, his own generosity of feeling doubtless now and then led him to believe that others were as incapable of selfish aims as he was himself. This, however, would at most have proved a passing illusion, for he was not the man to be permanently influenced by those who hoped to inspire his policy.

The Emperor Frederick was what the Germans so aptly term *ein sittenreiner Mann*; not merely a moral man in the common and narrow acceptance of the term, but also a man to whom the vicious meanesses of life were altogether unknown. Above all, he was himself the personification of a magnanimous and cultivated gentleman. Although he did not live to realize his ideals—some of them, perhaps, beyond all hopes of earthly realization—we may fervently believe that, apart even from his military triumphs, he is to be counted among the small body of men whose lives are given to the lasting service of the world.

\* \* \* \* \*

‘Princes born in purple,’ an old diplomatist once remarked, ‘possess one advantage over other men, inasmuch as they are not exposed to the temptation of



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stooping to unworthy means in order to "get on" in the world. They are born on the summit, and therefore are not obliged to climb or crawl in order to get there.'

A serene satisfaction is within their grasp on the very threshold of life, an enjoyment but rarely shared by humbler mortals—the privilege of contributing towards the welfare of others. And yet we know that in many respects the life of those so favoured is scarcely more fortunate than our own, for this world is no ideal city. It is ordained that no trees, not even those planted by princes, shall grow to touch the skies. The opportunities vouchsafed to the great are hedged and narrowed by endless restrictions. If they can count on the devotion of the few, they are also exposed to the envy and slander of the many. In moments of trial their position deprives them of the sweet solace of "grappling friends to *their* soul with hooks of steel"; confidants they can only possess by facing the perils inseparable from favouritism. As they are generally addressed in the language of servility, so in their turn they are liable to form an imperfect estimate of things concerning which, from the very multitude of interests constantly converging towards them, they can scarcely possess exhaustive knowledge. Such, then, is the natural working of the law of cause and effect, from which only those rare men seem to be exempt in whom the gift of intuition takes the form of genius, and does duty for knowledge and experience.

It is not easy to live a Prince's life, least of all in Germany, where, with all due loyalty to the occupant of the throne, nothing is taken for granted, not even the heaven-born virtues of a royal Prince. Outside

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the narrow circle of courtly self-complacency a ruthless spirit of criticism prevails, which, with scant respect for the purple robe, is only too ready to tear the laurel from a hero's brow. Does not a great German poet proclaim :

' The world delights to smirch the radiant splendour  
And drag sublimity along the dust ' ?\*

It is therefore all the more significant that malevolent criticism never attacked the Emperor Frederick. His magnetic personality, his stainless private life, blended with the memory of invaluable services in war, and constant efforts in peace for the welfare of others, disarmed the critic and strung the lyre of praise.

SIDNEY WHITMAN.

\* ' Es liebt die Welt das Strahlende zu schwärzen  
Und das Erhabene in den Staub zu ziehen.'

SCHILLER.

# L I F E O F

# THE EMPEROR FREDERICK

## CHAPTER I

### CHILDHOOD AND EARLY EDUCATION

1831—1849

THE marriage of Prince William of Prussia, the second son of Frederick William III., with Princess Augusta of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach took place on June 11, 1829, at Berlin, where the newly-wedded couple took up their residence at 37, Unter den Linden.

Prince William is thus described in a letter from Herr von Gagern to Freiherr von Stein, the great Prussian statesman of the time of the Napoleonic wars: 'He has the noblest appearance imaginable, and looks more impressive than anyone else; yet he is always simple and chivalrous, bright and amiable, though never lacking in dignity.' Nor did the character of the Princess lack admirers; Goethe, the greatest of German poets, wrote to a friend: 'And now to conclude with the most agreeable of all subjects. It afforded me intense pleasure to hear that

Princess Augusta gave you the impression of being so happy in her new life; in her the womanly and royal attributes are combined so perfectly that they really arouse one's astonishment and awaken feelings of regard and affection.' Prince William but echoed the poet's sentiments in penning the following lines to his father-in-law, the Hereditary Grand-Duke of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach: 'I trust I shall succeed in making Augusta as happy as she deserves and expects to be, and as I desire to make her.'

The home-life of the royal couple was guided by the talented Princess into the ideal atmosphere that had characterized her home in Weimar, where she had learnt to appreciate the intercourse with such men as the Humboldts, Bökh, Gneisenau, Boyen and others. She eagerly devoted herself to the study of the fine arts and music; her charm of manner and self-possession, no less than her never-failing tact, fascinated all who came into contact with her.

In the third year of their married life a son was born to them on October 18, 1831, the anniversary of the Battle of Leipsic, a fitting day for the birth of a Prince destined to achieve victories no less important than that of the *Völkerschlacht*.

On August 28 Princess Augusta had written to Goethe to congratulate him on his birthday:

'On this happy day, when you will be overwhelmed with the sincerest good wishes, permit me also, dear Herr Geheimrath, to add to those expressions the wishes which this celebration calls to mind, namely, the most heartfelt prayer for your health and happiness, which, though I am far away from you, I cannot

deny myself the pleasure of expressing to you in a letter.

‘May Heaven grant you the fulfilment of all those good wishes—to which I add my own—and may this happy day begin for you a year full of joy and free from all sorrow, in which I may, perhaps, have the great pleasure of seeing you so as to assure myself personally of your good health, and tell you verbally all that which these lines fail to express. These good wishes I send you, hoping that you will always remember and believe in the truest gratitude of your—

‘AUGUSTA.’

To this letter Goethe replied on November 9, 1831 :

‘The gracious letter of Your Royal Highness lent the 28th of August such glory that I, dazzled thereby, have hitherto been unable to suitably express my gratitude. The brightest hopes of Your Royal Highness still continue to cheer us, though they were at times overshadowed by anxiety. Thus, we lived to see the 18th of October, and when we caught sight of the bonfires and watched the coruscating fireworks, accompanied by loud reports, my most fervent wish was that they might prove true heralds of the joy now dawning on the horizon. Next morning everyone went to the Belvedere, where the Agricultural Society had collected and displayed, row by row, conclusive evidence of the progress made by agriculture and horticulture. Every product of the garden or the field—large plants and small, fruit-trees grown in the open air, roots and bulbs which thrive in prepared soil, and many other things which require more time to describe than to see and admire—were to be seen

there in the greatest profusion. Nor was there any lack of labour-saving appliances, which Science, with a view to assisting Nature, is for ever busy inventing.

‘While the wealth of the vegetable kingdom was thus filling us with wonder, news reached us of the convalescence of Your Royal Highness, and the intimation of the renewal of a race that for ever branches out afresh from the ancient and venerable stem transported us to the highest pinnacle of human happiness. I must leave Your Royal Highness’s own feeling to judge how this coincidence of epochs, events and happy omens stirred and moved us. I can only say how fortunate I consider myself in being permitted at such a moment to express my deepest thanks for the gracious remembrance, to which I at all times commend myself in true sympathy with the feelings of joy which similar circumstances inspire in the humblest, and which now electrify the most exalted ranks of society.’

The new-born Prince was baptized on November 13, and received the names Frederick William Nicholas Charles. Until the year 1840 the Prince was called Frederick both at Court and in all genealogical compilations, but on the accession of Frederick William IV. he was ordered to use his first two names—Frederick William. During the first two years of his life the infant Prince was nursed by Frau Rösener and Fräulein Weber before passing under the care of his governess, Madame Godet, the widow of a Neuchâtel merchant. A general supervision was exercised by Frau von Clausewitz, the widow of the celebrated Prussian strategist. Madame Godet was a woman of strong independence of character, and besides being deeply

religious, she was also highly educated, and had gained much experience in teaching in her old home in Neufchâtel.

Unfortunately, but few details of these early years and of the Prince's first happy childish games have been preserved. A letter of congratulation from the little Prince to his grandfather, Frederick William III., which is kept in the castle on the Pfaueninsel, near Potsdam, dates from the time of his first lessons. It is written in French, no doubt because the little boy, with childish pride, wished at the same time to show the King what progress he had made in that language.

'I congratulate you, my dear Grandfather,' he wrote, 'on your birthday, and hope, with all my heart, that you are always quite well. August 3rd, 1838.

'FRITZ.'

The earliest letter of the young Prince in English ran as follows :

'MY DEAR MRS. GÖRNER,

'I promise You that I will be very attentive, and I hope You will very soon come give me a very good lesson.

'I am

'Your

'Very good scholar,

'FRITZ WILLIAM.

'BERLIN, the 6th of January, 1841.'

A small collection of valuable autograph papers is in the possession of Herr Ernst, whose father shared the duties of tutor to the young Prince with Professor Schellbach and the headmaster Heller. Prince

William was then living at the Castle of Babelsberg, and these three tutors had to attend there on certain days of the week, and, besides other subjects, Herr Ernst had to give the young Prince lessons in writing. Among this collection is a note which had accompanied a porcelain cup, with a view of Castle Babelsberg, which young Fritz presented to his tutor. It is as follows :

‘BERLIN,  
‘December 22, 1844.

‘DEAR HERR ERNST,

‘Please accept this cup with my best thanks for the lessons which you have taught me. I hope the view of the little castle will very often remind you of the instruction which you have given me for six years.

‘With this wish, I remain,

‘Yours gratefully,

‘FREDERICK WILLIAM.’

Another item of the collection is a letter of condolence to the tutor, who had lost his wife, and had informed his pupil of this bereavement. It is dated Babelsberg, July 7, 1846, and contains this very characteristic passage : ‘I cannot express my sympathy so well in my own words, as in those of our Lord, “Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” But the greatest consolation no doubt is, that we have a Father above who sees our sorrow and hears our prayers.’

Corporal Bludau, of the 2nd Regiment of Guards, was chosen to give the Prince his first drill instruction, while Corporals Göhring and Kubon, of the 1st Infantry Regiment of Guards, were selected to supplement his



instructions. Later on the young Prince was handed over to Corporals Bantow and Tietz, of the 2nd Infantry Regiment of Guards. For these exercises the Prince wore a little military coat, which, as well as his cloak, bore the badge of the Stettin Landwehr Battalion of the Guards.

During the early days of his youth Fritz made great friends with Princess Charlotte of Prussia, who afterwards became Princess of Meiningen and mother of his future son-in-law. He was also frequently with his cousin Prince Frederick Charles and his two sisters. The Princess,\* who later on became Queen Elizabeth, the wife of Frederick William IV., had no children, and it was consequently a great pleasure to her to have her young nephews and nieces round her to fill the gap in her home life.

While Fritz was still quite a child, Rudolf von Zastrow, the son of a military officer, was chosen as his companion on account of his bright disposition, which formed a fitting complement to the Prince's serious nature. Absolute impartiality was observed in the education of the two boys. They were even dressed alike, and they were never separated until young Zastrow joined the army.

We are told that kindness of heart and the love of truth were the Prince's most prominent characteristics. In the autumn of 1838, when he was seven years old, his education was handed over to other tutors, and for this purpose Colonel von Unruh, who until then had been his father's aide-de-camp, was appointed his military governor, while Madame Godet's son, a young theologian from Neufchâtel, who had completed his

\* Daughter of King Maximilian I. of Bavaria.

studies in Berlin and Bonn, was appointed as his tutor. The Prince soon became much attached to the latter, and in after-years he declared that no one had been able to explain the more difficult questions of creed so clearly as Godet. Under the general superintendence of Colonel von Unruh the Prince received instruction from masters selected from the Berlin public schools, while officers of the army continued his military education.

Many detailed communications passed between the royal mother and the Prince's tutors with regard to the method of his instruction and education. She exerted all the compelling force of her personality to insure that the best methods should be employed, whilst still maintaining with the utmost tenderness the true position of a mother. The aim of all her endeavours and exertions in this matter was to give Fritz the widest, most liberal, and independent views possible, besides instilling in him a right judgment on all subjects.

He was taught music, dancing, gymnastics, and fencing, and had also to learn book-binding and carpentering, in compliance with the old custom of the House of Hohenzollern that all Princes should acquire the practical knowledge of at least one handicraft. The art of type-setting was acquired in 1843, when Herr Hänel, the proprietor of a large printing establishment in Berlin, presented the Prince with a complete though small hand printing press. A garden-chair is still shown at the Castle of Babelsberg which the Prince made in his youth for his father.

In later years the Prince often jokingly referred to his 'apprenticeship' in book printing, binding and

carpentering. On one occasion he inquired after the trade of a pupil at the Berlin Industrial School. On receiving the answer, 'Art carpenter,' the Crown Prince remarked with apologetic irony: 'I, too, was once a carpenter, but I never got so far as an art carpenter.'

The tranquillity of his boyhood was interrupted by various events. In 1838 a sister, christened Louise after her paternal grandmother, was born, and two years later, on the death of Frederick William III., the young Prince's uncle ascended the throne as Frederick William IV., and, in accordance with the Prussian custom, his father took the title of Prince of Prussia. When Prince Frederick William reached his tenth year, he received his commission as Second-Lieutenant in the 1st Infantry Regiment of Guards, and was invested with the Order of the Black Eagle. He was at the same time placed *à la suite* of the 2nd Battalion (Stettin) of the 1st Landwehr Regiment of Guards, and was introduced to the officers of his regiment in the following words: 'You are still a little boy, Fritz, but take pains to get to know these gentlemen. One day you will have as much authority over them as they now have over you.'

Professor Ernst Curtius succeeded Godet, who in 1844 had exchanged his post as the Prince's tutor for a clerical position in Neufchâtel. He held the position of tutor in the Prussian Royal Family for six years, his special duty being to give the Prince instruction in history and classical languages, and to cultivate his literary and artistic tastes. His efforts met with entire success, though it has been suggested that a more decided and robust tutor would

have been more suitable, master and pupil being perhaps too much alike in temperament. But there can be no doubt that the high sense of the ideal, the warm enthusiasm for all spiritual aspiration, the charm of his manner—in fact, all those characteristics which won for the Crown Prince a firm place in the hearts of his countrymen, and secured to him so great a share in the glory of the union of the German races—owe their development to a large extent to the teaching, example, and influence of his young tutor. The keen interest also in Greek antiquity which Curtius instilled into the Prince was in the future to bear rich fruit. Frederick rewarded his tutor by the most grateful affection, which he maintained throughout his life, and never failed to give a hearty proof of it upon every possible occasion.

Accompanied either by Colonel von Unruh or Dr. Curtius, he began to undertake short journeys into the neighbouring provinces and States. In this way he visited the towns and islands of the Baltic, and made long walking tours through the Harz, Thuringia, Saxon Switzerland, and the Giant Mountains, thus acquiring a taste for travel and a knowledge of the country and people by means of personal observation. Otherwise the summer was spent at Babelsberg, near Potsdam.

Already in his early youth the Prince acquired the good habit, which he kept up during his whole life, of noting down in diaries the varied impressions of the moment, and thus he remembered the occurrences and experiences, observations and sensations, of every day. It may have seemed to him of value to write a book about himself, and thus become his own biographer ;

and no doubt his quiet love of literary pursuits encouraged him to the further development of this habit.

The first notes in the shape of a diary date from his eleventh year, and during the three following years further notes were added to the collection, which received the title of—

‘LEAVES OF A DIARY.

‘OF THE PERIOD FROM OCTOBER 12, 1842, TO AUGUST 3, 1845.’

*October 12, 1842.*—The marriage of Marie, Princess of Prussia, who married the future King Maximilian II. of Bavaria. ‘In the evening George, Fritz, and Abbat came to us with their tutors; we then drove to the castle, where we were joined by Wiwi, Lolo, and Anna. We went to the room which adjoins the chapel; it was very hot, and we had to wait there for half an hour. Soon after we entered the chapel, and took our places to the left of the altar, and then the procession arrived. Papa accompanied Marie, Uncle King entered with Aunt William, Uncle William and the Count of Nassau led Aunt Elise, Uncle Charles came with mamma, Waldemar with Aunt Charles, Prince Augustus with Aunt Marianne, and Charles of Hess came with Elizabeth. Eylert then gave an address, after which, on the exchange of rings, a salute of thirty-six shots was fired, whereupon the attestation was read aloud by Max. When the ceremony was over we went into Queen Elizabeth’s apartments and loitered about during the reception. At last we had supper, after which we had to go through many dark rooms into the White Drawing-room. Here the torchlight procession began in the

usual way ; garters were distributed, and at its conclusion we separated. Marie wore a white dress embroidered in silver, with a train of the same ; all the Princes wore their orders, and the Princesses trains.

\* \* \* \* \*

‘After half-past one o’clock, October 26, 1842, everyone assembled in the rooms of the castle overlooking the court to witness the entrance of Aunt Sophie into Weimar.\* The procession began at two : first came the postilions, who filed past blowing their horns ; then came members of several guilds on horseback, followed by more on foot ; next followed the carriage, drawn by six cream-coloured horses, in which sat Aunt Sophie with Countess Redern, while Uncle Charles rode next to her on a gray horse. Behind the carriage drove young girls in various Dutch costumes, who had received Aunt Sophie. We went down to meet and receive the procession, after which there was a big dinner, and in the evening a family supper.

\* \* \* \* \*

‘On January 6 we had drawn lots among ourselves, and Fritz and Anna Carl were chosen kings for the beanfeast at Uncle Frederick William’s ;† but the feast was not kept till the 13th. We drove to the castle at half-past six and assembled in the hall, after which we formed into a procession, and marched in step to the White Drawing-room, where a throne had been erected, to which Fritz and Anna were conducted. The various masters of the ceremony next read out very amusing regulations, and after this F.

\* Princess of Holland, who married Carl Alexander, Hereditary Grand-Duke of Saxe-Weimar.

† The King of Prussia.

and A. distributed medals, the Court fool making jokes the while. When this was finished the ball began. First there was a reception, then dancing, and the ceremony of kissing hands, and a torchlight procession in the middle. A talking machine, which had been introduced as a surprise, was shown, then supper followed, and the evening ended with another reception and congratulations.

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‘The manœuvres of cadets under Fritz Carl began at twelve o’clock on July 9, 1843, in the big avenue which leads to Stolpe, where we had ridden with Fritz Carl, Gerhardt, Frentz, Rudolf, Fritz Salpius, and Adolf Königsmark. After we had distributed the arms and ammunition, the cadets came and were divided into two divisions; F. C. received Lieutenant von Rüssel as commander, with thirty-six cadets, besides Gerhardt and Frentz, while Lieutenant von Gurowski as commander, with thirty-six cadets, including Fritz and my friends, were assigned to me. F. C. thereupon marched into the heath, whilst his papa came to be present at our division, after which he drove away, three cheers being given, and then the manœuvres began. I, as Gurowski’s aide-de-camp, was put in command of ten scouts, and we beat Fritz almost to Stolpe, having stormed many hills and trenches on the way. At Stolpe an attack was made in order to get through the village, and after many assaults we at length reached the camp. I then became a scout, and lay down with the others, upon which each section received its rations separately. We ten drank out of the same glass and ate off the



same plate ; after that we got ready and recommenced the manœuvre. We were soon driven back towards Nikolskoi, and after several charges we had some refreshment at the roadside. I thereupon again became aide-de-camp, and we were beaten on the heath. After dinner we again passed through Stolpe, and disturbed the villagers at games ; and when the afternoon meal was finished, we got back to the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, where papa and Uncle Charles witnessed the finish. The enemy twice stormed a bridge and was repulsed, and then at last we got our supper. We again ate and drank together, and after some rest we returned to Glienicke by round-about ways, with beating drums and blowing of trumpets. The arms were twenty rifles, a number of blowpipes, and six bushels of peas.

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‘ On August 3, 1844, at a quarter to twelve o’clock, I drove to Potsdam Town Hall with Fritz Carl for the laying of the foundation-stone for the monument to the memory of King Frederick William III. The procession had just begun, and we joined it. When we reached the Wilhelm’s Platz the band played a piece, and then the Mayor, Herr St. Paul, made a speech, after which Herr Steinhausen read out the deed which was to be placed in the stone. I then descended into the vault with Persius, laid some mortar, and gave three taps with the hammer on the stone ; my cousin and the Prince of Württemberg, besides other gentlemen, followed me and did likewise. After this, money and the deed were laid inside, and the stone was closed, Sydow having pronounced the



blessing over it. At the close of the ceremony a hymn was sung, and we returned home.

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*                      \*

‘I drove to Potsdam with Fritz Carl at — o’clock, August 3, 1845, for the unveiling of the monument to the King in Potsdam, and we got down at the post-office. After a time we came out and waited on the bridge opposite the monument for the procession, which we joined, and took up our positions in front of the statue, which was still covered over. During the arrangements the King’s march was played. When St. Paul announced that the moment for the unveiling had arrived, the covering fell off amidst the cheering of thousands of voices. Herr Steinhausen then handed the charter of the monument to the Mayor, after which the National Anthem was sung. We then walked round the statue, and, having talked to several people, drove home.’

Of these early years General von Unruh relates the following stories, which he had intended publishing as an article in October, 1849, but which were discreetly withheld and not published until 1898, when they were noted down from memory :

‘The celebration of a birthday—as far as I can remember, the eighth or ninth—was over, and the happy party of playfellows had been sent home after supper. I then found the Prince at the writing-table, and did not disturb him. He seemed to be calculating. Now and then he put down his pen and became lost in thought, after which he would write on. Thus the hours passed. I watched my pupil without attracting his attention for a long time. It had grown

very late, when I, having after a time become engrossed in a book, looked round for the Prince, and noticed that he had quietly fallen asleep, resting his little head between his hands on the writing-table. So I rang the bell, and an old lackey carried the sleeper to bed. I then took up a small exercise-book into which the Prince had written names and numbers. Involuntarily my eye caught sight of that which had completely engrossed my royal pupil for so long, especially after the merry and noisy party, which had been going on since the afternoon. Every year King Frederick William III. gave his nephew Fritz fifty Friedrichs-d'or for his birthday, with the distinct understanding that he was to be free of restrictions and allowed to spend it independently. The task which had absorbed the Prince up to such a late hour, and which had formed the conclusion of his birthday, had been to find out to whom he would give pleasure and with what, also how much he might be able to spend upon each. This calculation was not done in equal sums, though in equal divisions, according to inclination, but more particularly with reference to the estimated merits of each case, as well as their separate circumstances and conditions. I was filled with astonishment by the earnestness of the work; the insight into human nature, the loving forethought (extending beyond the more intimate circles), and the charitable spirit of the boy touched me deeply. I added the number of entries together and found that Fritz, before he had fallen asleep, had allotted the whole of the fifty Friedrichs-d'or !'

'On a later occasion, presumably his twelfth birthday, Queen Victoria had given the Prince a handsome

kilt, complete in every detail. In the forenoon of October 18 the Princess of Prussia made her son put on the costly dress in her presence. I came in just then, and refrained with difficulty from an exclamation of admiration, for this becoming dress suited the Prince remarkably well, and made him look the picture of perfect beauty. The Princess, impressed by this, desired that her son should appear before her guests after the state dinner. At the appointed time, the Prince, attired as a Highlander, was conducted into the dining-room. I expected him to come back in triumph, with beaming countenance, and in an excited frame of mind, carried away by the genuine admiration of the gentlemen of the Court and the diplomatists, as well as by the tender speeches of the ladies. The Prince returned, however, after half an hour's absence, in a pitiful state of dejection, with tears in his eyes! As soon as the lackey who had conducted him had left the room, and he was alone with me, he broke out into a great passion, tore the costume off with violence, and threw the separate parts about. He looked even handsomer than in the Highland dress in his rage at having been made to act such a part, like in a circus, and at having had to submit to the impudent exclamations, horrid caresses, and familiarities. He concluded this storm with these words: "I will never wear this dress again; I am ashamed!"

'The Prince one day rushed into my presence with the urgent request that I would decide who had been in the right, his father or he, in a heated dispute which had taken place between them. Having received a detailed account of the differences of opinion from the

Prince, I made him answer many searching questions. After careful consideration, I was obliged to declare the Prince of Prussia to be in the wrong, in spite of the danger of deciding in favour of the son against the father, and thus strengthening his opposition. However, I determined at once to let the truth prevail, telling my pupil that everyone was liable to err, and that I was firmly convinced that this time his father was in the wrong and the Prince in the right. I wished to add the exhortation that he should not boast about it; but nothing came of this, for hardly had the Prince heard the verdict than he flung himself upon the ground, sobbing, and crying out, "Now everything is lost!" His last hope had been that I would convince him that he was in the wrong, and that then he might have apologized to his father, "but now everything is lost!" I was deeply moved by this, and desired the Prince to follow me to his father, to whom I was immediately announced and admitted, Fritz meanwhile waiting in the anteroom. I put the whole case before the father, telling him that I had discharged my bounden duty to the son by declaring that he was in the right and His Royal Highness in the wrong, and described the impression this had made upon the Prince. "To have such a son is a blessing from God!" was my concluding exclamation. The Prince of Prussia listened in silence, pressed my hand fervently, and then sent for his son. Upon his entrance he held out his arms, and exclaimed, "You are wrong, Fritz, but you are also in the right, and so you shall carry your point"; whereupon the Prince, filled with joy, embraced his father.

‘The Prince once complained to his tutor about one of his teachers, who had referred to the fact that he would one day be King, which statement the young Prince could not understand. The teacher then gave him a detailed explanation how, at the death of His Majesty, the Prince of Prussia would be King, and how upon his death . . . But he got no further, for the Prince interrupted him indignantly: “I know nothing about this; I have never thought of it, and I do not wish my father’s death to be referred to.” Fritz then entreated me to forbid the master to discuss such unseemly subjects. “Can that be a subject of education?” he asked. And so I took steps to close the mouth of the talkative master. The impression then made upon the boy remained with him until his manhood. When at Versailles, discussing with Bismarck how his position to the Emperor and the Empire would be described in the French language, the Chancellor had jokingly called him “Prince Imperial.” Against this the Crown Prince had protested that he did not wish to “wear Lulu’s cast-off garments.” Bismarck had then quite seriously suggested “Prince héritier de l’Allemagne,” and that early impression was revived. The Crown Prince declared that he had always detested the titles “Heir to the reigning Prince,” “Hereditary Grand-Duke.” “These are titles and rank which undisguisedly speculate on the death of the father.” Bismarck then found the present title in the article on the Dauphin in the Dictionary of the French Academy. The Crown Prince was satisfied with it, because he was thus not obliged to call himself the heir.’

The following letter from Emanuel Geibel, the poet,

to Fräulein von der Malsburg, affords an early glimpse of the young Prince's character :

' SALZBURG,

' June 10, 1847.

' . . . The intercourse with the Court of the Princess of Prussia, who manifested exceptionally kind feelings towards me, alone afforded some change in that monotony. An almost friendly relationship gradually sprang up between me and her son, Prince Frederick William, who will one day be King of Prussia. He possesses a simple, noble temperament, and a clear intellect, full of an innate regard for spiritual things.

' In many ways he reminds one of his grandfather ; but the sensible education which he has received, and which is founded upon the principle that he is not to grow up in royal seclusion, but as a man amongst men, makes one hope that some day he will, in a greater degree even than that worthy old gentleman, prove himself an ornament to the throne.'

On April 13, 1848, while General Leopold von Gerlach was paying his respects to the Princess William, he came upon the young Prince in the ante-chamber. Gerlach's diary contains the following entry with reference to this meeting : ' The young Prince is very amiable, modest, and natural.'

Moritz Busch\* quotes the following remark of Prince Bismarck in the year 1888, when describing his relations with the Emperor Frederick : ' Even in the year 1848 and 1849—he was still very thin and slight—he manifested a strong attachment towards

\* Bismarck : ' Some Secret Leaves from his History.'

me ; and when he was forbidden to do this at Potsdam, he was in the habit of strolling out in the twilight to shake hands with me.'

The Court Chaplain Heym was chosen to prepare him for his Confirmation. During the summer of the year 1848, after the Prince had received the necessary instruction, he made his public declaration of the Evangelical Creed in the Court Chapel of Charlottenburg on September 29 ; and in the presence of his family, the household, the clergy, his tutors, and his companions, he read out an essay which he had himself written upon his ideas of God and the truths of Christianity. He was confirmed by the head Court Chaplain, Dr. Ehrenberg.

On February 7, 1849, Colonel von Unruh, owing to ill-health, had retired from the position of tutor to the Prince.

The following entry appears in Leopold von Gerlach's diary under the date of May 3, 1849 : 'I drove to Potsdam in the early morning with Wrangel, the 1st Regiment of the Guards and the Rifles of the Guard being there. The Prince of Prussia spoke very well about Germany. At the dinner of the 1st Regiment of Guards, I sat next to the young Prince Frederick William, and I told him how I envied him on account of his youth, for he would no doubt survive the end of the absurd Constitutionalism. He was of opinion that a representation of the people would become a necessity, and I endeavoured to make it clear to him that Constitutionalism did not necessarily follow upon the absence of Absolutism.'

On June 3, 1849, the Prince was promoted to the rank of First Lieutenant, and during the autumn



manœuvres of that year he himself commanded No. 6 Company of the 9th Infantry Regiment (Colberg's), to which had been added the 1st Squadron of the Hussars of the Guard, and on one of the days of the manœuvres he captured an outpost belonging to the skeleton enemy.

On October 18, 1849, in the forenoon, a brilliant levee took place at the Castle of Babelsberg to celebrate the Prince's eighteenth birthday, which also formed the close of the period of his minority. All the State Ministers, including the President and several members of the Upper Chamber, numerous military personages, the households, deputations of town magistrates, and other notabilities, had arrived from Berlin by the eleven o'clock train. All present were in full dress. The young Prince appeared with his parents immediately upon their arrival, in order to receive their congratulations, among these being addresses from the town officials, which were read by the Mayor of Berlin, Herr Naunyn.

The Prince returned thanks, and said that, should Providence ever call him to a higher position, he would do all in his power to prove himself worthy of it, and that he would more especially always keep the welfare of the town of Berlin in view. He begged those present to tell their *confrères* that he had been most deeply touched by their attention, and that he repeatedly desired to thank them for it. After another address the Prince said: 'I am still very young, but I will prepare myself for my high calling with zeal and love, and will endeavour one day to realize the hopes which shall then be laid upon me by God as a duty.'

The town authorities of Potsdam and Brandenburg,



as well as the Patriotic Association of the latter town, presented addresses of congratulation to which the Prince replied, and, in thanking the magistrates of Brandenburg, he said that the exalted example of his ancestors would incite him, too, to be a faithful King to his people, if he should once bear the sceptre.

At the conclusion of this ceremony in honour of his coming of age, the admission of the Prince into the Chapter of the Order of the Black Eagle took place.

## CHAPTER II

### AT THE BONN UNIVERSITY

1849—1855

AFTER the Prince's coming of age preparations were made for his going to Bonn. His parents had for years planned that the future heir to the Crown of Prussia should attend one of the national Universities; but, as this was contrary to the traditions of the dynasty, the Princess of Prussia had used her influence unceasingly, so that her nephew, Prince Frederick Charles, should attend the University of Bonn on the completion of his home studies in 1846, in order to secure the attendance of a Prince of the House as a precedent for her son. Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, afterwards the Prince Consort of Queen Victoria of Great Britain, had studied political science and history there nine years previously, and the Princes Alexander and George of Prussia had also studied in Bonn for some time in order to complete their scientific education.

On November 7, 1849, Prince Frederick William arrived in Bonn to attend the University. His rooms were on the first floor of the University building, the former Elector's castle, in the left wing, facing the

Rhine. They consisted of three plainly-furnished rooms, from the window of which one could see the shady, wide-branching crowns of the huge old trees of the park, the extensive lawns, and the centre block of the Poppelsdorfer Castle, proudly rising in the distant background. The residence of his military escort, Colonel Fischer, adjoined the Prince's apartments, whilst the aide-de-camp, Lieutenant von Heinz, had to content himself with a room overlooking the courtyard, as had also the Prince's companion, Ernest Senfft von Pilsach, the son of the Ober-President of Pomerania, who now filled the place of the former companion, Rudolf von Zastrow. Ernst Curtius was also in the Prince's suite, but he only remained at Bonn for one term, and was then permitted to consider his task accomplished, having introduced his royal pupil to the circle of Professors and students in the Rhenish town and University with which he was so familiar.

Colonel Fischer, by his simple and unassuming manner, soon became a universal favourite in Bonn, and formed ties of intimacy with the Professors, more especially with Professors Perthes and Dahlmann. He had exercised the greatest influence on the Prince's education, and had above all things taught him independence, and guided his opinions on popular lines. A member of the upper middle class himself, he abhorred all ostentation with shallow pretence, all exaggeration and boasting of gilded class prejudices; he did not associate closely with the greater aristocratic circles of Berlin, nor could he be regarded as a 'strict conservative' according to the prevailing views. He led a happy family life with his

wife and children, and with them Frederick found a substitute for his home life. The Prince's studies were calculated to extend over a period of four terms, and were arranged on the following plan :

*Winter, 1850-51.*—Completion of German History of Law and of Political Law, four hours with Professor Perthes. German Civil Law, three hours with Professor Walter. Universal History from the fourteenth century, three hours with Professor Löbell. Politics, five hours with Professor Dahlmann. French Conversation and Style, two hours with Professor Monnard. English Conversation, two hours with Dr. Walter Perry.

*Winter, 1851-52.*—Political Law, four hours, Professor Perthes. International Law, two hours, Professor Hälschner. Criminal Law, two hours, Professor Bauerband. Ecclesiastical Law, two hours, Professor Bluhme. Literature, three hours, Professor Löbell. Science of Fortification, two hours, Colonel Fischer, and riding with officers of the 8th Uhlan Regiment.

He devoted himself whole-heartedly to his work with praiseworthy perseverance, for, with a just perception of their importance, he regarded the years of study as a period of preparation for his future high calling. Nevertheless, he did not give up all pleasures, for, 'He knew how to combine a love of study with a happy enjoyment of life; modesty with him was combined with regard for all knowledge and power. He would meet the members of a circle totally strange to him with frank cordiality, and remained faithful to those whom he had himself chosen from amongst his fellow-students, without distinction of rank or position, as his more intimate companions.'

An essay written by the Prince himself gives an idea of the great value which he placed on going through a University course. It was written during his third term, and is here given in his own words :

‘ The attendance at a University is of importance to every young man who has received the requisite school education, and intends to devote himself to the Higher Civil Service or to the cultivation of science. This period of study is of twofold importance : In the first place, the son quits the guiding and watchful care of his parents and the familiar home circle for the freedom of a public school, where for the first time he encounters temptations and allurements of all kinds, and has an opportunity to develop his character by forcible and resolute action, as well as by self-control, and by his intercourse with a variety of persons he is able to form a true view and clear judgment of human life. Secondly, it affords him the best opportunity to prepare himself for whatever branch of learning for which he may have a predilection. The Universities are so arranged that the Professors as well as the students are divided into various sections, according to the different branches of learning ; but the peculiarity of our Universities is that the faculties do not form separate schools, but are complete, and by this means the consciousness of their fundamental union is maintained in the various sciences. Not only the Professors, but also the students, are conscious of a sense of community in their learned calling, and enter mutually into a keen rivalry. All the students do not naturally consider the importance of this period of their life ; many a one only rejoices that he can spend some time far from all home ties

and habits, and, instead of giving his attention to study and culture, follows after the amusements and dissipations of life, losing precious time, which he has later on to make up with much work and trouble.

‘For many years it has become customary for Princes to attend the Universities. It is, of course, not their calling to devote themselves to the learned professions, but the nearer they come to the throne, the more intent must they be upon raising themselves above the various grades of society. An independent view and a right judgment concerning the practical conditions of life may even be obscured by a too exclusive taste for a particular branch of learning. In spite of this, however, the years of academic apprenticeship are of particular importance for Princes, since the majority of them leave the family and Court life to which they have been accustomed from childhood for the first time, and learn to know the world from a real and unvarnished side. No one can deny that no true picture of the life and doings of men can be gained at Court, and that it can only be acquired from the frequent intercourse with persons of all classes. At Court one is surrounded by people who invariably meet royalty with politeness, with the observance of ancient traditional forms, and only too frequently with deceitful flatteries, so that habit gradually leads one to think of life in no other way, and to estimate all men with whom one comes in contact by the same standard. Men are not accustomed to these forms by Nature; on the contrary, in public life they speak freely and candidly, and one must early become accustomed to realize that a very thorough man of learning and purpose is often concealed by a rough

and awkward exterior. The world happens to be so, and it is the duty of Princes, especially in these days, to get to know it thoroughly.

‘Universities are the centres of the more highly-educated young people from the different classes and districts of the country. At Court the growing Prince is mostly surrounded by older people, but here he enters the circle of his contemporaries for whom he is to live and act. He gains an insight into that which chiefly interests these young men, as well as into the prevailing aims and the hopes which they hold out. Lastly, the thirst for knowledge is greatly increased when one devotes one’s self to studies with a common interest, and this is the more important in the case of Princes, as in most instances, owing to their special circumstances, they have had to renounce these advantages during their earlier education.

‘The Prince has to devote his special attention more particularly to two special branches of study, law and history. In history, his constant task is to improve the view which he has gained by his earlier instruction, and thus to extend and perfect it, in order that he may realize more vividly the life and conditions of the people.

‘A Prince is, however, most closely concerned with law from amongst all the University studies, for his first duty and virtue should be the practice of justice.

‘It is law which regulates social conditions, and for this reason it is the basis of every State. The public law governs the relations of man to the State, just as does private law those of individuals to each other.

‘The historical vocation of the Romans was to set up the model of a consistent legal system for the whole



civilized world, and therefore a Prince must first acquaint himself with Roman law, in order to acquire a keen grasp of the conditions of the law. To this must be added later on the consideration of the German legal system, so that he may get to know the characteristics of his own people both in law and custom. Having been prepared by these legal studies, he will have to gain an insight into modern political and Church law, so that he may acquire an unprejudiced view of the most important State matters in a time of the most apparent changes and developments.

‘The system of State government, and more especially the organization of the State to which he belongs, will form the natural conclusion of these studies.

‘FREDERICK WILLIAM.

‘BONN, *Winter Term*, 1850.’

The Prince devoted himself zealously to the study of the French and English languages and literatures ; and in order to improve his style in French he wrote a description of the journey which he made in 1850 to Lombardy and Lake Como.

Dr. Perry gives the following account of his share in the scholastic training of his royal pupil : ‘At the request of the Prince I visited him three times a week, and had the honour of superintending his studies in English history and literature, in both of which he took special interest. His love for England and his great veneration of the Queen were most remarkable, and our intercourse became very agreeable and confidential. He manifested the keenest interest for all that I was able to tell him of England’s political and



social life, and when our more serious studies were over, we amused ourselves by writing imaginary letters to Ministers and leading members of English society.'

Whilst the members of the *alma-mater* at Bonn spent their time in drinking, rowing, or singing, the light of the lamp in the Prince's study would gleam until dawn down into the garden, shrouded in darkness.

During his time at Bonn the Prince also wrote the following reflections, with the earnest desire of coming to a definite conclusion as to questions concerning himself.

‘WHY, AND HOW, SHOULD PRINCES VISIT THE  
DISTRICTS OF THEIR REALMS?’

‘It is of great importance that the Princes of the Royal House should be personally acquainted with their own country. This principle is not always observed, and it seems to me that with us it has been neglected, more especially in recent times.

‘Derogatory rumours concerning unknown personages arise through this want of knowledge, as well as from misrepresentations—even a kind of forgetfulness and indifference, as if they did not exist at all.

‘If we take these disadvantages into consideration, the question forces itself upon us, How is it to be remedied? and the following suggestions have therefore been noted down :

‘The Princes, and the King also, must never reside too long in the capital, lest they should develop a habit of seldom leaving the scene of their daily life. By this it is not intended that they ought to be continually travelling about, or that they may not also peacefully and happily enjoy the pleasures of life in

the narrower or wider family circle. Moreover, the permanent residence of the Court must be in the capital, but a certain portion of the summer might be devoted to a gradual journey through one of the provinces, or to staying there for some weeks, during which time, by means of frequent parties and excursions, the inhabitants, both of high and low degree, might have an opportunity to become acquainted with their Sovereign. These visits could be so arranged that they might take place at the time of the manœuvres, or that these might form the beginning or end of the visit, so that, on the appearance of the highest dignitaries, the troops would present themselves just when their training had been completed. The troops would be delayed or disturbed in their training by too early an inspection. Another way to make the life at Court familiar to the provincial inhabitants, and to make them acquainted with the domesticity of their Sovereign, would be to induce the county families of distinction to come to Berlin during the winter. Their annual visit would be by no means conditional; the distinct desire need only be expressed for the attendance at Court of many of the distinguished country families. It would, of course, be desirable to make the middle classes acquainted with the capital, but should their means not suffice for this purpose, encouragement from those in authority would in that case be unadvisable, as that would *quasi* be forcing or enticing, which must here be entirely avoided.

‘The members of this class, though but feebly, are nevertheless represented to a certain extent by the members of both Chambers, who might often be drawn in, without feeling in any way the slightest class dis-

tion. Although the previously existing forms of etiquette and Court functions have, in our time, been abandoned with much just, but also with much exaggerated, contempt, the entire cessation of certain ceremonials and established customs must never be advocated.

‘The Court should everywhere appear with dignity and outward decorum, on greater as well as on lesser occasions, and everything must be done with strict military discipline. Court dignitaries may only appear before the King or the Princes with deference and signs of respect.’

Simple and friendly in his bearing, the Prince was unaffected in his intercourse with strangers, whom he invariably met with courtesy and kindness. His high descent was involuntarily revealed by the perfect carriage of his tall and well-knit figure. Except on special occasions, when he donned uniform, he wore a black suit—the coat buttoned up in military fashion, a black ‘Stürmer’ with a narrow bent-down brim, like the Austrian military cap, and carried a stick. His military companions, Colonel Fischer and Lieutenant von Heinz, never wore uniform.

The Prince was very punctilious in returning every greeting in the most friendly way. He liked to speak to acquaintances and to exchange little jokes with them, taking an animated share in general conversation, and, thanks to his unusual natural cleverness in speaking and narrating, there was never a pause ; but he always abstained from all reference to political questions. Besides this, he possessed the gift of a ready wit, and loved teasing, and, being quick at repartee, did not

take offence when anyone cleverly attempted to pay him back in the same coin. Care had, however, to be taken never to disregard the respect and deference due to his exalted rank; whoever forgot himself in this respect did not escape without a merited reproof. However, among the students he was very popular, being treated by them as one of themselves, and if, for instance, he arrived too late in Hall, there was as great a shuffling of feet as would have been the case had it been anyone else.

In all student-like transactions, as well as in any dispute with the University authorities, the Prince remained true to his fellow-students. He was a great favourite with the citizens of Bonn because of his unvarying and friendly manner, and they were wont to express their appreciation of him by crying, 'What a good-natured Prince!'—indeed, even at the present day all kinds of stories are told of his popularity.

Prince Frederick William lived on terms of close friendship with the Princes studying at Bonn, and more especially with the Hereditary Princes of Anhalt, Reuss, and Schwarzburg-Sondershausen, who appealed to him by their personalities, as well as by their thorough knowledge and their lively interest in all the political, social, scientific and artistic questions of the day. His intercourse with them was intimate; several times a week these royal fellow-students gathered for a social 'round table' in his rooms, and in later years he loved to call to mind the many stirring and happy hours he owed to them, and he remained bound to them by the ties of friendship up to the time of his death.

Frederick loved cheerful society, welcoming guests gladly to his rooms, and also accepted invitations to dinners and supper-parties with families known to him. Besides the family of Colonel Fischer, who supplied the place of his own home in the most friendly way, and with whom he preferred to spend his free evenings, he often visited the families of the Professors. He invited the Professors, as well as the chief officials and others, to parties, which took place at regular intervals either in the apartments occupied by Colonel Fischer's family, or in the larger drawing-room of his own residence, where a ball was also held during each winter term.

The Prince was in the habit of travelling to Berlin for the more important Court festivities or for specially solemn functions, such as the confirmation by oath of the new Constitution by the King (February 6, 1850), and the hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the kingdom of Prussia (January 18, 1851). When his parents left Berlin for Coblenz, in consequence of the Prince of Prussia's appointment as Governor of the Rhine Province and of Westphalia, he gained the desired opportunity of being oftener with his own family.

As he was returning from this Jubilee on January 21, the express train of the then Cologne and Minden Railway, by which the Prince travelled, ran off the rails between Gütersloh and Brackwede. The accident was probably due to the breaking of part of the engine near the left wheel, which caused the engine to run off the rails at the moment when the train was passing over the bridge. The carriages rushed on for a little while at their former speed, breaking the chains; and

then running off the line, the first five fell after each other down the right embankment, while the sixth carriage rolled over, and those following it went on for about 150 feet along the rails before they came to a standstill. Three unfortunate men—the driver, the fireman, and an American in the fourth carriage—were killed on the spot. Besides these many persons were more or less seriously injured. Prince Frederick William, who was in the fifth carriage with Colonel Fischer and Lieutenant von Heinz, received a slight blow on the back of his head. Although he had been thrown down by the concussion, he was the first to assist his companions to get out of the window, after which he rendered assistance to others who were either not so fortunate or so quick in leaving their places. The journey was delayed about an hour and a half, and was resumed with another train which had been sent on, and arrived at Deutz at half-past one.

In his official report of the accident to the Minister of Justice, Oberstaatsanwalt von Beugheim says : ' Prince Frederick William of Prussia occupied the most dangerous seat, and part of the side of the compartment, which was fitted with glass, was shattered ; but the hand of Providence, which protects the life of Kings, had him in safe keeping, so that, to the great joy of all patriots, he escaped almost unhurt. The Prince's calmness and presence of mind were admired by all.'

A monument in memory of the Prince's escape from death was subsequently erected on the spot where the accident occurred.

In the summer of 1850 the Prince undertook the

first more extensive journey to Switzerland, Northern Italy, and Southern France, including a visit to Toulon, Marseilles, Lyons, Arles, Nîmes, and Avignon. From these he returned to the quiet of his study, highly delighted and rich in new impressions. He had also undertaken an excursion to Luxemburg, in company with Lieutenant von Heinz, and often referred to it for a long time after, praising the beauties of the country and the friendly reception which they had been given.

The journey to England, which he made with his parents and his sister in 1851, undoubtedly had the greatest influence upon his whole life. The opening of the first great International Exhibition, which had been brought together by the untiring exertions of the Prince Consort, had drawn the eyes of the world to the British Isles. The Prince of Prussia with his family landed on British soil on April 29, and received a warm welcome from the Queen and her royal husband. He had encountered great difficulty in gaining the King's consent to this journey, and, in fact, only received the definite permission *en route*, at Aix-la-Chapelle. The first visit to the Exhibition was paid on the following day. At the opening ceremony, which took place on May 1, the Queen led the Prince of Wales by the hand, while the Prince Consort escorted Princess Victoria, a charming and unusually gifted child, towards whom the eyes of the tall Prussian Prince often turned in the midst of the rejoicings. The ceremony was magnificent. On the evening of May 1 the Queen wrote in her diary: 'The great event has taken place; it is a complete and glorious triumph, a marvellous and moving spectacle, which will ever fill



me with pride for my beloved Albert and for my country. Yes, it is a day which makes my heart swell with pride, praise, and thanksgiving; and the thought that my beloved husband is the originator of this peace festival, which unites the industries of all the nations of the earth, fills my heart with emotion, and it is ever a day to be remembered. God bless my precious Albert, God bless my beloved country, which has to-day proved itself so great! One was filled with gratitude to the great God, who seemed to inspire and bless everything.' The Queen also mentions her royal guests, the serious and determined character of the Prince of Prussia, and also his son, the young Prince, who 'is so good and amiable.'

The London newspapers spoke in high terms of the lively interest which the Queen's Prussian guests repeatedly manifested in all the public sights and national institutions, and in many newspaper reports special reference was also made to the young Prince. 'The young Prince Frederick William,' it was said in one account, 'spends almost the whole day in visiting the most important sights and curiosities of the capital; his healthy and strong nature seems equal to any exertion. It is said that he takes a specially keen interest in the beauties of architecture and in the collections of antique art treasures. Unfortunately, his stay is too short to enable him to realize to the full the magnitude and the freedom of the public life of England; nothing could probably be of greater gain to the impressionable mind of the youthful Prince than to learn from such direct observation during the period of his preparation.'



The Prince profited by his stay in England to make an excursion to the northern portion of the country. On his return to London his family left for Berlin (May 25). The young Prince returned a changed being: the tender flower of love for the charming British Princess had unexpectedly blossomed in his heart, and the following episode shows the deep affection felt by the Prince:

He had returned to Bonn, and was present at a small dance at the Hymmen's house at Castle Endenich. One of the frequenters of the little circle of fellow-students of the son of the house, Eberhard von Claer, came late, and was waiting for the end of the dance in a corner of the room. When it was over, he was about to step forward to salute the Prince, but found the latter already standing before him. 'Well, did you travel during your vacation?' asked the Prince. Claer replied in the negative, and the conversation then turning on the Prince's trip to England, he asked casually how the Prince had enjoyed it. 'Oh!' replied the Prince, 'it is beautiful there. I am very happy.' When Eberhard inquired as to the reason of this happy frame of mind, the Prince suddenly became serious, looked steadily at his companion, and then, stepping close up to him, he said in a subdued voice, 'If you will give me your word of honour that you will not repeat anything, I will show you something.' 'Your Royal Highness can entirely rely on my discretion.' Having quickly convinced himself that no intruders were near, he pulled out a large gold locket which was concealed near his heart, pressed the spring, and showed the young fellow its contents. To his great astonishment, the latter caught

sight of the portrait of an extremely youthful girl, with a charming face. After the Prince had held it before Herr von Claer for some time that he might observe it well, he gazed at it himself deeply moved, and then, having kissed it fervently, he placed it again near his heart. He then put his finger to his lips in order to enjoin silence, and returned to the assembled guests.

In the spring of 1851 the Prince's studies were interrupted, as has already been mentioned, in order that he might devote himself further to military training. On May 31 he was in command of the castle guard on the occasion of the public unveiling of the statue of Frederick the Great in Berlin. He accompanied his father to the Russian manœuvres near Warsaw, in the beginning of June, and, in commemoration of this visit, was appointed commander of the Russian Hussar Regiment, 'Isum.' After this he was on duty with the 1st Regiment of Infantry Guards, and also took part in the manœuvres near Lehnin. At the end of this task he was promoted Captain, on the King's birthday, October 15, as a proof of His Majesty's special satisfaction with the military precision shown. The Prince then returned to Bonn to continue his work at the University, which ended with the winter term 1851-52. He devoted himself to his studies to the last with unvarying industry, although the social calls during the winter had made many demands upon him.

'Now came the parting,' writes Lindenberg, 'and one could realize to an overwhelming degree how much the young Prince was beloved and esteemed in this Rhenish town. He, too, felt the parting keenly,

and often took the opportunity of saying how valuable an experience this time at Bonn had been to him, and how many faithful friends he had made there.'

The authorities of the University of Bonn presented him with a testimonial, which was formally handed to him by the Rector and Senate on March 19, 1852. The Professors and his chief friends gave him an album with inscriptions in remembrance of the time spent at the University, and the students serenaded the Prince with an enormous torchlight procession. The townspeople, also, on the eve of his departure organized a similar demonstration, in which all ranks of society took part.

The Prince's warm attachment to Colonel Fischer, his adviser and military companion during the time at Bonn, is shown by the following letter :

'POTSDAM,

'October 31, 1852.

'I thank you most sincerely, my dear Colonel, for your kind wishes for my birthday, as well as for the interesting contents of your letter. We have been parted for the first time on that day after many years of mutual companionship, and I knew well that your thoughts, as well as your heartfelt good wishes, would accompany me. Whenever I think of the time spent at Bonn, I am filled with gratitude for much important, instructive and practical knowledge which you helped me to gain, the benefit and use of which I am still learning to recognise and value more and more. My regard and veneration for you are closely connected with these recollections. My stay here, as well as my

journey to Russia, which interrupted my military education, have opened up for me a wealth of knowledge, both of men and of the world, which I shall, with the help of God, hope to make use of and add to during all the circumstances of my life. I intend, also, as far as time will permit, during the coming winter, to devote myself to the study of all branches of military science, and I hope that the time is not far distant when we may acquire by practice that which can never be taught by the most skilful manœuvres in times of peace.

‘Remember me most kindly to your dear wife and the children, and accept the assurance of the unchanging and sincere regard which I shall retain throughout my life.

‘Your very sincere

‘FREDERICK WILLIAM, P. OF P.’

On the return journey from Russia, which was made by sea, the machinery of the steamer broke down, and they were unable to proceed without assistance. Half an hour after the occurrence, a vessel from Lübeck came in answer to the signals of distress, and, after three hours’ battle with the waves, took the royal steamer in tow. Upon his return the King gave the Prince the command of No. 6 Company of the 1st Infantry Regiment of Guards. The Prince discharged his duty with the utmost care, and not only were his efforts directed towards the thorough practical training of the men, but he was also almost over-conscientious in the concern which he showed with regard to their food, and for decent and good behaviour outside the service. Owing to his excellent memory

for faces, he knew almost every individual soldier by sight, and in his direct intercourse with them he showed that he understood how to combine kindness and cordiality with the strictness of military discipline. Thus, he might have been seen on October 18, 1852, on his twenty-first birthday, surrounded by the soldiers of his company, to whom he had given a supper, followed by a dance.

In a letter from Potsdam, November 24, 1852, the Prince shows how well the life of a soldier suited him :

‘ Though the duties of a Captain, which I have to attend to here in Potsdam, give me real pleasure, they take up most of my time. Nevertheless, I am exceedingly happy with my military comrades, and I spend most of my time with them.’

Whilst this regimental service aimed at the practical training of the Prince, he employed the winter months in the study of theory as well. With this object in view, he took part in the military discussions, held every Tuesday under the direction of the Chief of the Army Staff, Lieutenant-General von Reyher, besides attending a series of lectures on military tactics. The Prince early concurred with the King and with his father in their anxiety to maintain the old standard of Prussian discipline among the rising generation of officers as well as to satisfy the ever-growing demands which modern times make upon the scientific training of the soldier.

In the midst of his military training the Prince also made it his business to acquaint himself better with the civil government, and for this purpose President von Flottwell was chosen by the King to explain

to him the various branches of provincial government.

At the end of May, 1853, the Prince contracted inflammation of the lungs, the result of a chill, from which, happily, he very soon recovered. After a month in Ems and three weeks in Switzerland he had regained sufficient strength to resume his duties as Captain by the middle of August.

On August 23 a patriotic fête was organized on the battlefield of Grossbeeren in commemoration of the victory which had been gained there forty years previously. Prince Frederick William, who took part in it, made the following speech at the banquet in the village of Grossbeeren :

‘ The first toast which is given by true Prussians at such reunions is always for His Majesty, our King and Ruler ; and if at this great commemoration festival I follow the custom, it is because I am convinced that you are all inspired with that feeling which always thrills us when we think of our beloved Fatherland. On this day forty years ago a battle was fought on this very spot which, in the first instance, saved the capital of the country, and also showed the world at the same time that we can courageously enter the lists against every foe. Our heroic fathers here at Grossbeeren first proved that our race was strong enough to beat the armies of foreign nations, and thus they led the way for a series of conquests which characterize that glorious epoch of our growth. Just as at the call of our venerated King, His Majesty Frederick William III., our people rose up as one man, and joyfully sacrificed life and property for him, as so many who are present can testify, so in like manner

we too are united by the one determination, should the call of our King summon us, to fight and fall for God, the King, and the Fatherland. Let us, therefore, as a proof of this sentiment, raise the old cheer which always salutes our flag,' etc.

During the autumn manœuvres this year the Prince was not in command of a company, as he had been made aide-de-camp to the Commander of the Guards, Count von der Gröben, so that he might also learn the duties of that position. His promotion to be a Major *à la suite* of the 1st Infantry Regiment of Guards followed on September 11.

In the presence of the Russian and Austrian Emperors, the Prince of Prussia, accompanied by his son, inspected the Austrian contingent of the German Federal Army, in the autumn of 1853, at Olmütz. At this inspection the Emperor Francis Joseph appointed the Prince Colonel-in-Chief of the Infantry Regiment No. 20—one of the oldest and most glorious of the Austrian Army, which had been raised by the Grand Master of the German Order, Ludwig Anton von Pfalz-Neuburg, in the year 1682.

On November 5, 1853, the Prince was admitted a Freemason by the Grand Master of the Great National Lodge of Germany, to which Order he was introduced by his father. The Prince began the 'work' most zealously, and in subsequent years he also devoted a portion of his spare time to the study of Freemasonry.

A journey which the Prince undertook in the early days of December had a far-reaching influence upon his artistic education. His suite consisted of General Roth von Schreckenstein, the Chief of the Staff of



the Rhineland and Westphalia command; Lieutenant-Colonel von Alvensleben, Lieutenants von Berg and von Brandenstein, of the 1st Infantry Regiment of Guards; his aide-de-camp, Major von Heinz; Dr. Wegner; and the Court Architect, Strack, who acted as art adviser. They travelled *viâ* Vienna to Trieste, and from there by an Austrian man-of-war to Ancona. On December 20 they arrived at Rome, where the Prince stayed in the Palazzo Caffarelli, then the residence of the Prussian Ambassador. Harry von Arnim\* was at that time acting as substitute in the absence of the Ambassador, Count von Usedom.

The Prince was received by the Pope with all honours. The amiability and gentleness of His Holiness did not fail to make an impression on the Prince, more especially as the Pope did not conceal his sincere liking for the young representative of the Hohenzollerns. The mind of the Prince was deeply influenced by the winning charm of this eminent man, and, even during the embittered strife of later years, the Prince retained a kind remembrance of him. It is recorded that at their first meeting the Pope stretched out his hand for the customary kiss of homage, but the Prince, as the representative of one of the great Protestant States, did not feel himself called upon to submit to this conventional form of greeting, and he therefore shook hands heartily. The Pope, whose sense of humour was well known, greeted his visitor upon all future occasions, on his entrance, by placing his hands behind his back.

The Eternal City, with its unrivalled historical past,

\* Arnim was subsequently made a Count, and fell into disgrace after violently attacking Prince Bismarck.



with its imposing ruins, with its churches and palaces, its art treasures and museums, was an inexhaustible source of delight to the Prince. Thanks to the Pope's forethought, he was able to visit even those galleries which are, as a rule, closed to most people. A brilliant fête was arranged in honour of the Prince by Cardinal Antonelli in the name of the Pope, and after it was over the royal guest was invited by the Secretary of State to view the museum in the Vatican, which was lit up by torches.

In his gracious and winning way, the Prince often mixed in the society of the leading members of the German colony as well as of the German savants and artists.

The younger Papal families, such as the Princes Aldobrandini, Massimo, Torlonia, and Prince Bonaparte-Canino, vied with the ancient feudal families of Colonna, Doria-Pamphili, Borghese, Rospiglioso, Chigi, Barberini, Sforza-Cesarini in giving brilliant fêtes in honour of the Prince.

On March 8, 1854, Prince Frederick William left the Papal Capital for a month, as he desired to see something of Southern Italy. He went first, viâ Gaëta, to Caserta, the residence of the Neapolitan Court, where he was received with great ceremony by King Ferdinand II. and the Duke of Calabria (the subsequent King Francis II.), who also soon after accompanied him to Naples. He ascended Vesuvius, viewed Herculaneum and Pompeii, and visited Camaldoli, Amalfi, Pæstum, Bajæ, and Pozzuoli. After having been to Sicily, he returned to Rome to spend Easter there. He was present at the service in the Sistine Chapel on Good Friday, and saw St. Peter's illuminated by

torches on Easter Day. On April 17 he took leave of the Pope, and quitted Rome the following day, *en route* for Berlin viâ Orvieto, Florence, and Venice, and arrived at his German home on June 6, 1854.

The Pope gave the Prince a minute and exact model of the Triumphal Arch of Titus made of costly antique marble, besides two magnificent vases and a large number of copper-plate engravings of the masterpieces in the Vatican.

A bunch of orange-leaves, with a special note attached, which the Prince had received from Pope Pius IX. whilst on this journey, and which are still found amongst his possessions, prove how carefully he collected and preserved such remembrances.

Prince Frederick William was introduced by the King to the Privy Council at its re-opening on July 4, 1854. About this time he also began to take an interest in the activity of public societies, and a short time afterwards accepted the presidency of the special committees connected with the Central Agricultural Union of the Potsdam Government, and was present at the general meeting of the same on December 7, 1854.

The Prince had until then been exclusively attached to infantry regiments, but he was now to accustom himself to the other branches of the service, and so on June 15 he was ordered to serve with the Artillery Regiment of Guards. At the head of the first six-pounder battery he marched along the dusty road to Tegel in the summer, was present at target practice, messed with his comrades in barracks, marched with the regiment to the manœuvres, and went into billets with them.

On September 22 he joined the 1st Regiment of Dragoons, and at the same time attended the lectures of Major-General von Hopfner at the Military Academy.

King Frederick William was much pleased with his nephew's military proficiency, and on October 15 surprised him with the exceptional distinction of promotion to the command of the 1st Battalion (Berlin) of the 2nd Landwehr Regiment of the Guards. The increasing attention paid by the military world to the improvements and alterations in the various systems of small arms induced the King to appoint a Commission to examine the merits of the Minié rifle. It was a proof of the confidence which his royal uncle placed in the Prince that he was selected as a member of this Commission, which was composed of the most distinguished and experienced representatives of military science.

But a yet greater distinction followed, which was the more highly prized by the Prince because it was quite unexpected, and might therefore be considered as a direct reward for his zeal and military thoroughness. The Prince had taken part in the autumn manœuvres, and, according to the custom of the Prussian service, the commanders of the various divisions met together to give their opinions of the result of the sham-fight, the efficiency of the separate divisions, and the bearing of the troops and officers. It was naturally a matter of great difficulty for the young Prince to join in the deliberations of these old and experienced officers, and criticise the various phases of the sham-fight; but he stood the test. The King listened with surprise to the lengthy criticisms which

his nephew made with frankness and scientific earnestness. The accuracy of his judgment and the telling proofs of his objections, as well as of his favourable comments, astonished the King, and he was glad to seize the opportunity to confer upon his nephew an unusual military distinction in recognition of his military progress, and before the assembled officers he made him a Colonel. To enable the Prince to gain a practical knowledge of the duties which his latest promotion imposed upon him, he was in the autumn of that year given the command of a battalion with the 1st Regiment of Guards.

The following incident shows the great interest which the twenty-four-year-old Prince took in gaining knowledge apart from his military exercises and studies. The great mathematician Gauss had died in Göttingen on February 23, 1855, and efforts were made in Hanover to induce the most celebrated of German mathematicians, Professor Dirichtlet, to replace Gauss at Göttingen. Professor Dirichtlet was not only a great savant, but was also equally distinguished as a teacher, so that Professor Schellbach hoped, through the influence of the Prince, who had been his pupil, to avert the threatened loss. He had discussed the whole matter with him, and as a result the latter sent the following letter to Alexander von Humboldt :

‘MY DEAR HERR VON HUMBOLDT,

‘A few days ago I was informed that the Professor of Mathematics, Lejeune-Dirichtlet, had accepted an appointment at the University of Göttingen, and that it has caused much regret in the

learned circles of Berlin, where he is regarded as one of the most celebrated mathematicians of Germany, and a great ornament of our University.

‘At the same time I heard that when, upon the death of Professor Gauss at Göttingen, the rumour got about that Dirichtlet would be nominated as a candidate, the latter had expressed his willingness to accept an official call to that University, and that he regarded the promise then made as binding. The Ministry of Education does not seem to have taken much notice of this assertion, so that now Dirichtlet has actually accepted the call, naturally to his great regret, as he feels the parting from Berlin and all his relations and friends very keenly.

‘He is, however, supposed to have said that if he had been aware that his departure would be regarded with disfavour at Court, supposing his pecuniary resources were increased, and he were released from teaching at the Military Academy, he would gladly remain here. Of course, a letter from our King to the King of Hanover would be required to release Dirichtlet from his promise. Minister von Raumer seems also disposed to raise the salary to 2,000 thalers. I was requested to lay the matter before the King, which I did yesterday. He listened to me, and was annoyed with Dirichtlet’s mode of action; he thinks the King of Hanover would not respond to a request of that kind, and he desired in the first place to apply to you, dear Humboldt, as you at that time brought about his appointment.

‘As it is doubtful, however, whether His Majesty will ask you about it at once, and as the matter has been represented to me as extremely urgent, I now

write to you, even at the risk of citing facts of which you are already aware, in order that you may know how I have been informed, and that you may be able to lay it before the King. How very, very sad it would be if the University should lose so distinguished a genius, as it has been the wish of everyone in Berlin that a great number of the most prominent minds of our century and Fatherland should be united here!

‘I will close for to-day, my dear Herr von Humboldt, with many apologies should I have wearied you with well-known details.

‘I remain, as always,

‘Your entirely devoted

‘FREDERICK WILLIAM.’

Alexander von Humboldt replied by return, thanking the Prince for the great efforts which he was making to preserve to his country one of the greatest mathematicians of the day. He stated that Professor Dirichtlet was a man of the strongest character, who would not swerve from his decision, but that he had stated that he would remain if the King of Hanover would release him from his promise. Humboldt had had an interview with the King, in which the latter had expressed his annoyance, not with Dirichtlet, but with the Ministry of Education, for the incapacity and indifference which had caused so great a loss.

## CHAPTER III

### THE PRINCE'S ENGAGEMENT

1855—1857

ABOUT a year after the Prince's journey to Italy, Colonel von Moltke, the Chief of the Staff of the 4th Army Corps, was appointed his personal aide-de-camp. This particularly happy choice, and the wonderful care that had influenced the selection, received the following recognition from the German press: 'It is without doubt not only the eye of the father, who was so anxious about the military training of his son, that discovered a man as Mentor for the young Prince (he was more than aide-de-camp to him), who was distinguished alike by his many-sided mental culture and his great knowledge, besides his strategic talents. Helmuth von Moltke was then already known as the accomplished author of the 'Letters from Turkey'; and in the narrower circle, which included Princess Augusta, the strategist had already been recognised as a man of genius.'

It has often been remarked that the Emperor William I. had thoroughly mastered the art of dis-



covering and drawing to his side, in the many departments of the Government, men of unusual powers, who all worked together in complete harmony.

Moltke was then fifty-four years old, while his Telemachus was twenty-four. The bond between the two was based on their similar tastes, and was more than the ordinary attachment of brother-officers. The love of travel which they had in common was an influence which calls for special attention, for the years of their companionship formed almost one long and uninterrupted journey.

The Prince had now passed into manhood amid the brilliant society of Court life, and yet he often experienced a feeling of loneliness inseparable from his exalted station. No wonder, then, that his thoughts often turned to the bright and happy home life he had witnessed in England, and to the entrancing ambition of some day establishing such a home for himself. It was with rose-coloured hopes that the Prince set out in September, 1855, on a journey to Scotland, which eventually proved the turning-point of his life. At Balmoral he met the Princess Royal, who during the five years that had elapsed since they last met at the Great Exhibition had developed into a charming girl, and on September 20 he formally proposed for her to Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.

‘Now for the *bonne bouche*,’ wrote the Prince Consort to his friend and confidant, Baron von Stockmar, on the same day. ‘The event you are interested in reached a definite stage after breakfast. The young man laid his proposal before us with the permission of his parents and of the King; we accepted it for ourselves, but requested him to hold



it in suspense as regards the other party till after her Confirmation. Till then all the simple restraints of girlhood are to continue undisturbed. In the spring the young man wishes to make his offer to herself, and possibly to come to us with his parents and his engaged sister. The seventeenth birthday is to elapse before the actual marriage is thought of, and this will not take place till the following spring.

‘The secret is to be kept *tant bien que mal*, the parents and the King being at once informed of the true state of the case, namely, that we, the parents and the young man, are under pledge, so far as a pledge is possible, that the young lady is to be asked after her Confirmation. In the meantime there will be much to discuss, and I would entreat you to come to us soon, that we may talk over matters face to face, and hear what you have to advise. The young gentleman is to leave us on the 28th. In this matter he placed himself entirely at our disposal, and I suggested fourteen days as not too long and not too short for a visit of the kind. I have been much pleased with him. His prominent qualities are straightforwardness, frankness, and honesty. He appears to be free from prejudices and pre-eminently well intentioned. He speaks of himself as personally greatly attracted by Vicky. I regard it probable that she will have no objection to make.’

Prince Albert again wrote to Baron Stockmar on September 29: ‘Victoria [the Queen] is greatly excited; still, all goes smoothly and prudently. The Prince is really in love, and the little lady does her best to please him. . . . The day after to-morrow the young gentleman takes his departure. We have

to-day received the answers from Coblenz, where they are in raptures; the communication has been made to the King at Stolzenfels, and has been hailed with cordial satisfaction. They are quite at one with us as to the postponement of the betrothal till after the Confirmation.'

In the meantime such a tender affection was hard to conceal, and the intention of keeping it secret from the Princess Royal proved impracticable. What took place on the same day is told in 'Leaves from the Journal of Our Life in the Highlands':

'*September 29, 1855.*—Our dear Victoria was this day engaged to Prince Frederick William of Prussia, who had been on a visit to us since the 14th. He had already spoken to us on the 20th of his wishes, but we were uncertain, on account of her extreme youth, whether he should speak to her himself or wait till he came back again. However, we felt it was better he should do so, and during our ride up Craigna-ban this afternoon he picked up a piece of white heather (the emblem of good luck), which he gave her, and this enabled him to make an allusion to his hopes and wishes as they rode down Glen Girnoch, which led to this happy conclusion.'

In the following letter to Baron von Stockmar the Prince continues the story of the engagement:

'BALMORAL,

'*October 2, 1855.*

'Prince Frederick William left us yesterday; Vicky has indeed behaved quite admirably, as well during the closer explanation on Saturday as in the self-command which she displayed subsequently and at the

parting. She manifested toward Fritz and ourselves the most child-like simplicity and candour. The young people are ardently in love with one another, and the purity, innocence, and unselfishness of the young man have been on his part touching. . . . Abundance of tears were shed.

‘The real object of my writing to you now is to enclose Vicky’s letter to you, which goes with this, and in which the child finds vent for her own feelings.’

On his return journey the Prince unburdened his heart to Mr. Perry, whom he had always treated as confidant, and to whom he had already hinted at his hope of winning the hand of the Princess Royal. ‘It is not politics,’ he said, ‘it is not ambition : it was my heart.’

And six months after, in a letter from Potsdam, of April 14, 1856, to a relation, the Prince writes :

‘My relations to my dearly-loved *fiancée* are based on heartfelt affection, which is the true foundation for my future domestic happiness. Her comparative youth, her mature qualities, both of heart and mind, soon brought us together, but owing to the Confirmation this had to be kept secret until it was over. The wedding will certainly not take place until next year.’\*

Duke Ernest of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha gives an interesting account of the betrothal in his memoirs, ‘My Life and Times’ (vol. ii., p. 355 *et seq.*), and at the same time points out the political importance of this event :

\* The Confirmation of the Princess Royal took place on March 20, 1856.

‘In its genealogical history, the Royal House of Prussia has long presented a curious picture of oscillations between the West and East of Europe. Whilst family unions between Orthodox Russia and Catholic Austria were almost entirely excluded, the Protestant creed in no wise prevented the Hohenzollerns from a strong tendency towards the family of the Czars, and the connections which were thereby made unquestionably exercised their influence upon Germany. The Crimean War may be considered as a political lesson upon this chain of circumstances.

‘Was it not most extraordinary that, even before the conclusion of peace with Russia, the Royal House of Prussia was, in its matrimonial plans, on the point of manifesting a decided tendency towards the West of Europe? Without doubt the union of a Prussian heir-apparent with a Princess of my wide-branching House was an event which at the moment certainly seemed to be contrary to Russian traditions. Bearing in mind how at the end of the war everyone regarded my brother as the moving force against Russia, though at the beginning this was not manifest, the marriage of a Prussian Prince who was appointed to the succession with a daughter of the Queen of England could not fail to have a marked political character. My brother, however, loved his eldest daughter too much to be influenced exclusively by political considerations with reference to her marriage; and I often had an opportunity of observing that the chief desire of his heart had been for many years to see his favourite child fill some high position. With fatherly ambition, he used to imagine his promising daughter, whose talents had been early developed, upon a mighty

throne, but, above all, I know that he desired to make her also really happy. The Prince of Prussia, above all other scions of reigning Houses, inspired the greatest hopes for the future. . . .

‘The parents of Prince Frederick William had often seen Princess Victoria during their stay in England in the year 1853, when she, at the age of thirteen, made a most favourable impression upon all hearts, and more especially upon the guests staying at the English Court. Before this there may have been little thought of a union between the future Prussian Crown Prince and my brother’s daughter.

‘In the year 1855 there was an idea that Prince Frederick William should travel with a view to choosing his future wife. He had gone to England just as I had left for the Paris Exhibition, and he arrived at Balmoral, where the Court then was, on September 14. When I, upon my return from Paris, went to visit the Prussian Royal Family at Coblenz, the news of the engagement of the young people, which had in the meantime taken place, was received as a strict secret.

‘At that time a second family event, which was the cause of our visit, had also taken place at Coblenz; for my brother-in-law, the Prince Regent of Baden, on September 30, became engaged to Princess Louise, the daughter of the Prince of Prussia and Princess Augusta.

‘Frederick William IV., who was at that time staying at Stolzenfels with the Queen, received the news of the two engagements of his brother’s children with enthusiasm; and my brother was especially gratified that the union of his daughter coincided so

exactly with the wishes of the King and of the bridegroom's uncle.

‘Under the circumstances, it was impossible to keep the news of the happy event from reaching the public earlier than had been the intention of the Royal Family. This rumour was more readily believed because the engagement had been long desired in Germany, for seldom had such an event held out a happier or more promising future, both personally and politically.

‘In spite of this, my brother did not wish this engagement to be publicly announced. His own conception of the whole occurrence will be doubly welcome to-day, judging by the confidential notes which he sent me ; and although I know that details of this kind can have no general historical significance, yet I feel sure that, considering the extraordinary interest which exists for each and all of the persons concerned, my remarks will be received with kind indulgence. “Yesterday I received” — writes my brother on September 24—“your letter of the 20th, by which I see that you will arrive in Coblenz to-day on your return journey from Paris. You may there have heard what I am going to write to you about to-day, that our guest expressed to us his wish to marry Vicky, with the King's consent. We agreed willingly, but begged that he would not propose to V. until after her Confirmation next spring. A marriage before her seventeenth birthday, in November, 1857, cannot be thought of. You will recognise, as we do, the importance of this event, and rejoice with us. His parents, who are now at Coblenz, are highly delighted, and the engagement of his sister with your brother-in-law

unites you and Alexandrine all the more closely. I close only because my lame hand and sore shoulder compel me to do so. I have only been able to hold the pen once since yesterday. Fritz William leaves us again to-morrow. I must ask you for all our sakes to preserve this secret because of the reasons already given. All the world will speak of the event, but as long as no one of us does so it will not matter."

'My brother's surmise was correct, for, in spite of the intended postponement, the formal betrothal of the Prince with the Princess had taken place during the following days, and the Prince had departed an engaged man. Undoubtedly, it was just this secrecy concerning this event which made it possible for several newspapers, such as the *Times*, which were embittered against Prussia, to express themselves against the rumoured union in such a manner as to cause the Queen and my brother much grief. They were the hardest words which ever fell from the English press against Prussia and the House of Hohenzollern.

'But the family events at Balmoral and Stolzenfels gave rise also to all kinds of dissatisfaction in many reactionary circles of the Prussian capital. The more the Liberal papers of Germany applauded, the more disagreeably was the other side affected by the unpopularity of the circumstances which threatened to strengthen at the Court of Berlin the influence of the royal relations, whose sentiments were not regarded with favour.

'One of the peculiarities of Frederick William IV. was that, with reference to his personal sympathies, he would not submit to any coercion from those who were familiar with politics and affairs of State, so that the



secret opponents had to beware of expressing their displeasure at the new family connections.'

A passage from Theodor von Bernhardi's diaries (vol. ii., p. 330), which gives an illustration, not lacking in humour, of Duke Ernest, may be inserted here :

'The young Prince Frederick William developed most favourably, and showed much character. His marriage with the Princess Royal rests on mutual attachment. He led up to it with much dignity and diplomacy ; both were necessary, for the marriage is regarded with horror by the *Kreuz-zeitung* party, and they would gladly have done anything to prevent it. Last year the Prince went on leave to Ostend, and he only told the King that he intended going to England in order to ask for the hand of the Princess Royal when he was bidding farewell to him just before his departure. The King, as the head of the family, immediately gave his consent, and promised to keep it secret ; this he did so strictly that even the "champions of the cross," his immediate entourage, only heard of the event, to their great astonishment, through the newspapers. General von Gerlach came to the King quite indignantly with a sheet of the *Kölnische Zeitung*, and complained of the absurd reports that were being spread abroad. It was said that the young Prince was going on to England from Ostend for the purpose of proposing for the hand of a Princess. The King laughed aloud, and remarked, "Well, yes, and it is really the case."

In the winter of 1855-56 Prince Frederick William's parents made arrangements to enable their son to gain insight and experience into the Government and



business of the Ministers, in addition to further military training; and it is specially noteworthy that the Prince showed a keen desire and great conscientiousness in the duties which he was to perform. The following letter, written to General von Schreckenstein, shows how the Prince endeavoured to justify his standpoint by a precise and clear statement concerning the subject under consideration :

‘CASTLE BABELSBERG,  
‘*July 25, 1855.*

‘MY DEAR GENERAL,

‘I have only had sufficient time during the last few days to look through your most interesting pamphlet on the Battle of Borodino, and as I did not wish to write to you until I had done so, you must excuse my not having thanked you before for sending it to me. I cannot tell you how much it has appealed to me and what pleasure it has given me to read. I was especially attracted by the remarks which you have added to the historical part, in addition to your personal experiences. I am bold enough to assert that you have, through them, given to us younger members of the army admirable practical rules, which each one may very well take to heart.

‘It would be well if you would in this way communicate a great many such experiences of your own, and I think the favourable reception which this publication on Borodino has now received is the best proof of the gratitude which one would owe you if you would do so.

‘How can I enter into the details? It would be a difficult and lengthy matter were I to emphasize all

that which interested, and was new to, me. Pray, therefore, accept my sincere thanks as a slight proof of the great pleasure which it afforded me.

‘Since my return from my interesting journey in the Province of Prussia, I have once more gone through your observations upon horse-breeding with great interest, as I had an opportunity of seeing several studs and remount depots, such as Trakehnen, Neu-Hof, Surgaitschen, etc., where there were magnificent horses, with which the regiments will no doubt be satisfied this year. It seemed to me that the breeding of horses is, in general, in a flourishing condition in that province, and the prices have risen in an incredible way; yet I heard the opinion expressed that in a few years the breeding would yield such a large number of beautiful horses that the high prices would fall in consequence.

‘The other day my mother communicated to me the letter which you had written to her with reference to my winter studies. I agree with your suggestions that I should get to know the affairs of the Ministry of War and of the Government. I candidly confess, however, that I do not share your opinion that I might finish battalion drill simply by drilling several times in the coming autumn; it is my great wish to acquaint myself with the course of training of that corps by taking the command just as I did as a captain—at least, during the autumn and until the completion of the spring drill. Knowing myself as I do, the fact of having commanded a few times would not give me sufficient confidence to enable me soon after to act as a superior officer. It would also be extremely painful for me to remain in the

immediate neighbourhood of the regiment without being in any way connected with it, and having to occupy myself entirely theoretically at a desk. I venture to tell you, my dear General, since you, as you know, have my entire confidence, that I am of the opinion that the army might think I had no special interest in occupying myself further with the duties and affairs of the service, were I now to omit the battalion and regimental training, and then, soon after, become a superior officer.

‘I am sure you will not misunderstand me for thus pouring out my thoughts to you; there are so few people to whom I can do this in the way I do to you.

‘Concerning the command of a regiment, I own that, taking into consideration my youth and slight experience, the leading of a body of officers certainly arouses some misgivings in me. I cannot, however, as yet say much upon the whole subject, because I have only thought over it in a general way, and had certainly not reckoned on the possibility of such an event before next summer.

‘It seems to me that, in comparison with the duties of a Captain or of a commander of a regiment, there is but little to do until March, and in occupying myself theoretically during the winter; the command of a battalion would not be a waste of time therefore.

‘These are some of the ideas which have been suggested by reading and thinking over your words. I add the question regarding the garrison town, for Potsdam has not a very favourable reputation. I am personally especially attached to the 1st Regiment of Guards, as well as to that town, and I cannot deny that a second winter in Berlin, where I have already

spent two summers, would be extremely distasteful to me. It would not be difficult for me, were I occupied frequently at the War Office, to undertake other work as well on the same days; should I have to attend these, say, twice a week, I could also undertake some other appointment at Potsdam, as it is easy to get there by train.

‘I could only occupy myself with Government affairs at Potsdam, as that town is the seat of the Government, just as Berlin is only for the Ministries, and there I should gain no advantage by attending without previous knowledge of the administration in detail, especially since its representatives are men who could be of use to me.

‘I have thus, my dear General, communicated my thoughts to you, as well as can be done in writing, and I beg for a frank rejoinder, should you have the inclination or the time for it. I must now say farewell, in the hope that this may find you in good health. I received news of you through Herr von Brandenstein and Herr von Heister, and I was glad to hear from them that you were well; but I can understand how trying it must be for you now that so many trusted friends and acquaintances have been removed, for you are, as it is, already so very solitary in the big house.

‘I hope I shall have the great pleasure of seeing you once more, dear General, in the course of the summer, and I need not say how much I should appreciate it.’

The more comprehensive the Prince's insight into the conduct of affairs of State became through his

work in the Ministry, the greater grew his aversion to the prevailing system of government. His liberal views and his strict sense of justice disgusted him with the art of government as practised by the Manteuffel Ministry. The Prince had poured out his heart to his future father-in-law in a letter, and had severely criticised the official methods of elections. Prince Albert thereupon wrote him the following reply :

‘ WINDSOR CASTLE,  
‘ November 6, 1855.

‘ MY DEAR FRITZ,

‘ Accept my best thanks for your friendly letter of the 22nd ultimo. The state of Prussia, as you describe it, is most critical, and designs such as those contemplated by the reactionaries, prosecuted by such means as are at this moment practised in regard to elections, may result in extreme danger to the monarchy ; for if the world be overruled by God, as I believe it is, vile and wicked actions must bear evil fruits, which frequently do not show themselves at once, but long years afterwards, as the Bible tells us in the words, “ The sins of the fathers are visited on the children to the third and fourth generation.” This being so, I ask myself what the duties are of those who are to come after, in reference to the sowing of such dragons’ teeth ? And I am constrained to answer that they are enjoined by morality, conscience, and patriotism not to stand aloof as indifferent spectators of the destruction of a Constitution that has been sworn to. And when I consider what I should do in the present state of things, this much is quite clear to me : that I would record a solemn protest

against such proceedings, not by way of opposition to the Government, but in defence of the rights of those whose rights I should regard as inseparable from my own—those of my country and my people—and in order that I might absolve my conscience from any suspicion of participation in the unholy work. At the same time, however, that my conduct might be divested of every semblance of being dictated by a spirit of opposition or desire for popularity, and—in order, it may be, to make the step itself unnecessary—I should in all confidence make those who are contemplating the wrong aware of my intention, and should not conceal the fact from my friends, yet at the same time I should live on terms of peace with the reigning powers. I am satisfied that an attitude of this kind would inspire the delinquents with a certain measure of alarm, and help to keep the nation from losing all hope; and there is no such solid basis for patience as hope.

‘In your letter of the 3rd instant to Victoria, which she received yesterday, you speak of your new labours and studies in the different Ministerial departments. When you have worked there for some time, the truth of Axel Oxenstiern’s saying, “My son, you will be surprised with how little wisdom the world is governed,” will become obvious to you. I am only afraid that it will be nobody’s interest to explain essential principles to you, and that, on the contrary, they will try, perhaps not unintentionally, to overwhelm you with the multiplicity of details and of so-called work; but this good must at any rate ensue, that you will become thoroughly acquainted with what is making history. Most German bureaucrats cannot, and even will not,

see the wood for the trees ; they even regard the abstract idea of the wood as something dangerous, and measure its value by the density with which the trees are huddled together, and not by the vigour of their growth. Added to which, the weight and number of German official documents is something appalling.'

The spring of the year 1856 at length terminated the secrecy which hovered about the engagement of Prince Frederick William and Princess Victoria, although it was only made known to the public at large eighteen months later. For the present the news was communicated confidentially to the relations of the House of Prussia and to the royalties of other countries.

The following letters of various dates from Princess Alice, afterwards Grand-Duchess of Hesse, reflect the feeling with which the prospective union was regarded in the English Royal Family :

'DEAR FRITZ,

'I cannot tell you what great pleasure and surprise it has given me to hear from my dear parents that you are henceforth to be so nearly connected with our dear Vicky, and that we may think of you as of a brother. We are all so fond of you, and are convinced that Vicky will be exceedingly happy with you. We shall, of course, be sorry to part with her, as she has always been the kindest sister to us ; as, however, her leaving us will contribute to her happiness, we must, out of love to her, familiarize ourselves with the thought that you are going to deprive us of her.



Please kiss your dear mother's hand for me, and with much love to dear Vivi,

‘ Your loving  
‘ ALICE.

‘ April 9, 1856.’

‘ BALMORAL CASTLE,  
‘ October 13, 1856.

‘ DEAR FRITZ,

‘ I wish you many happy returns of your birthday, and hope you will spend it in health and happiness. We will all think of you with affection on the 18th, and wish that you were here. The enclosed pin is intended as a small gift from Affie and me, and we both beg you to accept it from us both. I am sorry to say we leave Balmoral the day after to-morrow. We often took the lovely walks which no doubt you still remember, and they reminded us of you. I lately spent a whole day out of doors with my dear parents, and papa shot two fine stags. You cannot imagine how much I enjoy going out shooting with my parents.

‘ Good-bye, dear Fritz ; with renewed good wishes,

‘ I remain,  
‘ Your loving  
‘ ALICE.’

‘ WINDSOR CASTLE,  
‘ December 26, 1856.

‘ DEAR FRITZ,

‘ Before this letter reaches you you will probably be in possession of the handkerchiefs which Vicky has sent you through Sir Colin Campbell from us four, and I hope you will like them. I again wish, though rather late, that you will spend a very happy Christmas with your family, and please accept my best wishes



for your happiness and prosperity in the New Year. I cannot tell you how much kindness I experienced this Christmas. I received a quantity of the loveliest things; it would only bore you were I to enumerate them all, therefore have patience until you can see them with your own eyes. Only think: whilst we were quite engrossed in viewing our presents, we saw, to our great surprise, a gigantic Father Christmas enter covered with snow. He was very gracious, in spite of his enormous and threatening birch, and handed us a quantity of Nuremberg ginger-nuts and gilded nuts from his large bag.

‘This surprise had been prepared by papa, in order that Arthur’s wish might be realized, for he had long wanted to see a Father Christmas.

‘Now I must say good-bye, and ask you to thank your dear mamma many times for her charming present. I will write to her myself to-morrow.

‘With love,

‘Your old cousin,

‘MAUDEN.’\*

The Emperor Napoleon wrote to Queen Victoria on April 12 as follows :

‘We heard with the greatest satisfaction that Your Majesty’s plans for the happiness of the Princess Royal are approaching their realization. We hear so much that is good of Prince Frederick William that I am convinced that your charming daughter will be happy.’

In May Prince Frederick William, accompanied

\* A pet name sometimes used by Princess Alice when writing to her family.

by Colonel von Moltke, paid a visit of several weeks' duration to his *fiancée* and her parents.

After his return from England the Prince resumed his military occupation, and on July 3 he was given the command of the 1st Regiment of Guards, a battalion of which he had commanded the year before. The Prince had, however, received injunctions to communicate with Colonel von Blumenthal, who in the subsequent wars became the chief of the Prince's staff, in matters of importance with reference to the command of the regiment, when the decision needed greater military knowledge. In a letter to a relation from Potsdam, July 14, the Prince says :

‘I for my part am living the roughest soldier's life in the most stirring way, and with it all I am exceedingly well and happy ; but, between ourselves, there is hardly breathing time.’

In the month of August Prince Frederick William travelled with a large retinue to Russia, as the King's representative at the coronation of the Emperor Alexander II. at Moscow, and he gives the following graphic description of the ceremony, which took place on September 7 :

‘The coronation took place to-day, punctually and exactly as prescribed by the programme, and was favoured by the warmest and most brilliant sunshine. This beautiful ceremony belongs to the rare occasions of one's life, which are never forgotten ; it passed off wonderfully well.

‘As a final preparation of Their Majesties for the coronation Communion, a religious service took place yesterday evening in the Czar's chapel which lasted fully two hours, and at which only the more intimate

circle of the Imperial Family and I were present. Aunt Charlotte listened from outside, and afterwards blessed Their Majesties by giving them two new and beautiful images in the state-rooms of the Kremlin.

‘The thunder of guns and the ringing of bells this morning at seven o’clock announced the importance of the day, and at half-past eight o’clock we assembled in Aunt Charlotte’s drawing-room in the Kremlin. (She had slept in the state bedroom.)

‘I understand too little about the subject to be able to give a description of the wealth of the gowns worn by the Grand-Duchesses; they had jewels on almost all the seams of the dress and train, and, with the exception of Mary, had chosen to wear ermine trimming. Mary wore sable *à la Bajarde*, as she said. My grandmother in white and *drap d’argent*, as well as Fanny, looked magnificent. Marouça appeared for the first time in a train. We Princes, as well as all the Knights of St. Andrew, wore the chain of the Order, as did also the Emperor, besides the ribbon of the Order of St. Vladimir. Shortly before nine o’clock the Empress Marie appeared, dressed entirely in *drap d’argent* and diamonds (like a bride in our family), and with a train; as headdress, only long curls. Aunt Charlotte thereupon entered, wearing the diamond crown on her head, while over her richly-embroidered gown, trimmed with jewels, she wore the Empress’s cloak of cloth of gold lined with ermine, besides the diamond chain of St. Andrew. Her headdress consisted of the ordinary curls in front, with longer ones hanging over her shoulders, and besides this a long veil.

‘At nine o’clock the procession began to move, after

both Sovereigns had with much feeling bidden farewell to Aunt Charlotte. The aunt, with Nisi and Mishi at her side as supporters, and accompanied by all the Grand-Duchesses and foreign Princes and children, then walked through the large drawing-rooms, where the Guard of Chevaliers lined the way, and the ladies as well as the corps of officers were drawn up.

‘The moment when we ascended the “crasnoi cryllyo” staircase was imposing. The cheering, closely-packed and gaily-dressed crowd on high platforms, the troops formed in line, the ringing of bells, mingled with the National Anthem and the thunder of guns; finally, the beautiful gowns of the Grand-Duchesses on the crimson-covered pathway—all this combined must have made an abiding impression upon everyone, especially if one recalled the historic past of these rooms.

‘Aunt Charlotte took her place inside the church under the canopy at the right of the two imperial thrones, the rest of us being close beside her, but two steps lower down. The diplomats were on the right of the altar, whilst on the left stood the numerous ladies and Maids-of-Honour on amphitheatre-like platforms.

‘We had to wait a good quarter of an hour before the Emperor arrived, walking immediately behind the regalia, and accompanied by all the clergy. Both Sovereigns were only to do homage before the chief images; but the Empress had already entered a chapel, when the Emperor caught sight of her, and summoned her by one of the priests.

‘Then the Emperor repeated the Creed loudly and clearly, after which the actual act of coronation

followed, when the old Philaret held the crown towards him, after the long golden cloak and the diamond chain of St. Andrew had been placed round him. The Emperor took the large glittering crown with both hands and placed it on his head, whereupon the Philaret, after an address, handed him the sword and imperial sceptre. The Emperor then turned towards the Empress Marie, who, advancing in front of him, knelt upon a cushion, held in readiness by George of Mecklenburg, and was crowned, the Emperor first removing his own crown, and holding it for a moment over her head before he placed the small crown on her head. Four late Ladies-in-Waiting then came forward to fasten it on, and also to place the cloak and chain of St. Andrew on her shoulders. The crown suited the Emperor extremely well, and he looked very handsome wearing the long gold mantle and with this regal attribute on his head. After we had all knelt down to pray, everyone bowed to Their Majesties ; and then followed a touching moment, when Aunt Charlotte advanced to the Emperor and, blessing him, embraced him. All the Grand-Dukes and Grand-Duchesses and we Princes hereupon followed likewise, also kissing Aunt Charlotte's hand. Unfortunately, when Louis of Hesse approached, the Empress Marie's crown is said to have fallen upon her cloak (I did not see it), three diamonds falling out. At any rate, it was not again put on securely until the actual Mass began, and this time it was safely attached.

‘ During Mass the Emperor removed his crown ; and when the priests had communicated the Emperor was invited by two Bishops to the anointing as well as the Holy Communion, and, preceded by the regalia, he

approached the imperial porch of the Iconostas, followed by the Empress. When descending the steps he threw one more glance towards Aunt Charlotte, and then the anointing and Communion took place; but I could not distinguish anything clearly, as there were too many people surrounding Their Majesties, and, besides this, the Grand-Duchess Helena, who had several times to sit down, sank into my arms almost fainting, and was with difficulty restored to consciousness with water and smelling-salts.

‘These were about the chief incidents in the coronation ceremony. It would be impossible to describe the dignified bearing of Aunt Charlotte during this beautiful service; there can be but one opinion on the subject. Often standing, and leaning upon Mishi, she apparently took part in everything that her son had to go through; great feeling and force of mind were evident in her features and in her whole appearance. She was the picture of an Empress and a woman of distinction. Thank God, she was able to go through it all without a sign of weakness, walking both up and down the “*crasnoi cryllyo*,” only having to be carried through the rooms. She was finally present at the banquet in full dress, and between eight and ten o’clock in the evening drove with us in an open carriage through the streets to view the illuminations. To-day she drove out about ten o’clock, and I dined with her.

‘To return to details, the exemplary order with which everything passed off deserves special recognition. Rehearsals had taken place almost daily; only the old fellows who had been honoured with the bearing of the regalia were occasionally awkward.

The unusually numerous clergy officiating, headed by three Metropolitans, were robed in cloth of gold, into which red crosses and ornaments had been woven. The singing during the whole church ceremony was fine, but not as specially wonderful as I had expected; the second part of the *Domine, salvum*, etc., was, for instance, very elevating, as was also one part during the singing of the Mass, where three children's voices sang alone. Unfortunately the "igi" did not come in.

'The cloth of gold of the three imperial mantles was very valuable, and the eagles on them were very finely embroidered. The Emperor's crown is composed entirely of diamonds and divided in the centre by a hoop mounted *à jour*. There are rows of pearls on the inner sides of the two divided parts, while a gigantic ruby surmounts the hoop itself.

'Whilst we escorted Aunt Charlotte back, the Emperor and Empress, still wearing their crowns, went the round of the churches; but going outside the Church of the Apostles, so that they might be seen by the public standing between this and the Nicholas Palace, they did not re-enter the inner courtyard until they reached the Ivan Veliki.

'One o'clock had struck when we got back to Aunt Charlotte's after having spent four hours in church. The banquet took place at three o'clock in Granovitaja Palata. We Princes did not take part in it, but dined in the "taimk," a room half-way over the Granovitaja Palata, from which the female members of the Czar's family formerly used to watch the festivities looking through a narrow, semi-bow window. The three Sovereigns, each wearing the imperial regalia, sat by



themselves under the canopy hung with real ermine, and were waited on by the High Court functionaries. The diplomatic circle had to look on, standing, until after the soup, when they retired, walking backwards. Besides Their Majesties, the Court circle, both men and women, also dined in the same hall at tables which surrounded the great centre pillar on the one side at an acute angle, the other side having to remain empty to allow of the dishes being carried through, each one being escorted by two Chevalier-Garde officers with drawn sabres. Each dish, when brought near, was preceded by the head Court officials carrying golden staves 8 feet long; at the top of each was the double-headed imperial eagle. The most beautiful silver vessels of enormous dimensions stood on the sideboard, and altogether this ancient historical hall presented quite an extraordinary appearance. The coronation medals were distributed during dinner; they were even larger than a four-thaler piece (if there were such), of massive gold, and said to be worth 100 ducats apiece.

‘All the foreigners staying here were invested with various Orders.’

On September 17 the Prince arrived at Berlin, as the wedding of his sister with the Grand-Duke Frederick of Baden, fixed for September 20, had induced him to hasten his journey.

Later on Prince Frederick William, accompanied by Major-General von Moltke and Major von Heinz, left on a flying visit for London to congratulate Princess Victoria on her sixteenth birthday, November 21.

They returned from England viâ Paris December 11, in order to pay a complimentary visit to the Emperor



Napoleon, who received his royal guest with special honours.

Napoleon regarded the family union between the English and Prussian Royal Houses with a feeling of depression. He feared that England, yielding to Prussian influence, would break off the alliance with France. But he allowed himself to be tranquillized by Lord Clarendon, who assured him that Queen Victoria's private attachment to the House of Prussia had nothing to do with politics. On receipt of the letter which the Queen of England had sent to Paris for the Emperor by her future son-in-law, Napoleon replied: 'We like the Prince very much, and I do not doubt that he will make the Princess happy, for he seems to me to possess every characteristic quality belonging to his age and rank. We endeavoured to make his stay here as pleasant as possible, but I found his thoughts were always either at Osborne or Windsor.'

In connection with this visit, the Empress Eugénie is said to have made the following remarks concerning the Prussian guests (in a letter to Countess W.):

'The Prince is a tall, handsome man, almost a head taller than the Emperor; he is slim and fair, with a light yellow moustache—in fact, a Teuton such as Tacitus described—chivalrously polite, and not without a resemblance to Hamlet. His companion, Herr von Moltke (or some such name), is a man of few words, but nothing less than a dreamer, always on the alert, and surprises one by the most telling remarks. . . . The Germans are an imposing race. Louis says it is the race of the future. *Bah! nous n'en sommes pas encore là.*'

In the beginning of the year 1857 the Prince removed to Breslau to assume the command of the 11th Infantry Regiment, and took up his quarters in the Royal Palace, where he remained until September. He soon became the centre of society there, and invited many of the leading civil and military authorities to dinner. The ball which the town gave in the theatre in his honour, and his presence at the Festival of the Tradesmen's Guilds, were proofs of his evident popularity, and of his desire to keep in touch with the educated middle classes. It also gave universal satisfaction that the Prince was not exclusively engrossed by his military calling, but found time and leisure to be also present at the sittings of the Government at Breslau. Neither did he disregard the intellectual side of the Silesian capital, for he entered into personal relations with the most distinguished of its leaders. Many excursions afforded an opportunity for seeing something of the province, and in Upper Silesia he inspected all the principal centres of the mining industry. The Prince descended the Louise Mine, near Zabrze, dressed as a miner, and was greeted in its depths by a choir with songs. The neighbouring Riesengebirge also repeatedly attracted him, and the great trading districts of Waldenburg and Freiburg appeared to him an instructive picture of the industry of his Fatherland. He even went over the battlefields of the War of Liberation—the much-disputed one of Katzbach as well—where Colonel von Moltke combined historical reminiscences with military instruction.

During the Prince's stay in Breslau, Von Moltke was in close companionship with him as his aide-de-

camp, and described his experiences and travels in a number of letters to his wife.

More than eighteen months had now elapsed since the betrothal of Prince Frederick William, and the reasons which had rendered the publication of this happy event unadvisable no longer existed. The *Preussische Staatsanzeiger*, on May 16, 1857, therefore published the following announcement :

‘ His Majesty the King has to-day been pleased to announce to the Royal Family, as well as to the Royal Household, that the engagement of H.R.H. Prince Frederick William with H.R.H. Princess Victoria Adelaide Mary Louise, Princess Royal of Great Britain and Ireland and Duchess of Saxony, has taken place to-day, with his consent, and with the assent of Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. A similar announcement has been made in the Privy Council by Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland. Public notice is, by command of His Majesty, herewith given of this event, which will rejoice not only the Royal House, but also the entire Monarchy.’

A month after this public announcement, the Prince, accompanied by Major-General von Moltke, left Breslau for several weeks to pay another visit to his royal *fiancée*. During his stay at the Court of Great Britain, a visit was also paid to the Manchester Art Exhibition. Moltke, in the following letter, describes the events of that day :

‘ LONDON,  
‘ Friday, July 3, 1857.

‘ In Manchester, Prince Albert and the two young Princes drove with us, at two o'clock, to the Town Hall,

where the Mayor and Aldermen presented an address to our Prince. A canopy of red velvet had been erected on a daïs. An ornithological monster represented the Prussian eagle, a species which has as yet not been seen in this country. The "big-wigs" of the town, with their better halves, filled the hall. After we had taken our places beneath the canopy of red velvet (it may have been Manchester velvet), the Mayor read his speech. I received this piece of eloquence on parchment; it was quite of the same description as the address to the Queen, and I handed the Prince his reply, which he had himself drawn up, and which he read, in a loud and clear voice, naturally in English (with a slight German accent, said the *Times*, by whom I am called Count Moltke). The speech was interrupted by numerous "Hear, hears!" and then came the most important event, a splendid luncheon, at which the stout "Knight" presided as host. Owing to the honour which had been done to their town, no doubt, the waiters had become so extraordinarily confused that I rose hungry from the table. For instance, two fresh glasses were, at dessert, placed before each guest, but they all remained empty, for the simple reason that no one poured anything into them. To me, at any rate, a jelly, with strawberries, was handed immediately after the fowl. I think a mistake must have been made, and when it was discovered it was too late to go back to fish and roast beef.'

The presentation of the Freedom of the City to the Prince took place in London on July 13, in the Guildhall, at which, besides the Duke of Cambridge, the Ministers, the Bishop of London, the Ambassadors

of Prussia, France, Belgium, Greece, Turkey, and of the United States of America, were also present.

Prince Frederick William started on the return journey on July 14, but first went to Baden-Baden to see his mother, who was paying a visit to her daughter, recently married to the Grand-Duke of Baden. He then resumed his command at Breslau.

The Prince Consort, in a letter to the Prince of Prussia, in the summer of 1857, says :

‘It gives me great pleasure to hear that Fritz returned so well satisfied with his official visit to England. He will have been convinced that the country looks with favour upon his alliance with our family, and does full justice to him, meeting him with kind feelings, as a man and as a Prince of Prussia. We well knew that this was the case, but it gave us satisfaction to see it confirmed before the entire world, and recognised by himself. He, on his part, made the best impression by his public appearance.’

In writing to his wife from Breslau, on August 22, 1857, Moltke remarked :

‘Our correspondence has been fairly industrious, but yesterday the Prince told me that he had a letter of forty pages from his affianced bride by the last post. The news must have accumulated rather !’

At the end of August the Prince's regiment received orders to join in the divisional manœuvres in the neighbourhood of Reichenbach, and as at their termination his command was also to cease, he bade farewell to the regiment with which he had so thoroughly shared the many hardships of military service. The different battalions were drawn up on the Reichenbach highroad, between Panthenau and

Lauterbach, and the Prince addressed them in the following words :

‘I cannot part from you without thanking you sincerely for the fidelity and obedience with which you have executed my commands. . . . I found diligence and energy from the first moment unto the last. It afforded me the greatest pleasure when I was able to present my regiment to my father, the Prince of Prussia, and I still rejoice that I have had such soldiers under my command. I shall never forget you nor the time spent among you, and my greatest wish is that with you, who are most of you my fellow-students, I may receive the baptism of fire in the face of the enemy. The fulfilment of this wish would give me endless pleasure.’

The Prince then called together the officers and bade them farewell, speaking words of thanks and recognition and shaking hands with each of them. Deeply moved, he then galloped off towards Reichenbach, followed by the cheers of the regiment.

The Prince’s one endeavour had been to gain the love and confidence of the regiment. At the manoeuvres he allowed himself no rest, day or night, and after the most exhausting marches he would walk or ride until far into the night, round the outposts and billets, to ascertain the arrangements made for the accommodation and comfort of his men. The Prince invariably bivouacked with the troops, when billets were not forthcoming, and on one such occasion he was much amused to find that field-mice had eaten away the lining of his helmet during the night.

October 3, being the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the 1st Infantry Regiment of Guards,

as well as the military jubilee of King Frederick William IV., was kept with much ceremony. Upon this occasion the Prince was promoted to the command of the 1st Infantry Brigade of Guards. This new distinction was enhanced by the addition of the following words to the royal order :

‘As a reward for praiseworthy zeal and gratifying progress in military studies.’

Some days later the King had a stroke of apoplexy, and Prince Frederick William, who, as the King's representative, was attending a christening in the family of Prince Frederick of Schleswig-Holstein, at Castle Prinkenau, was obliged to return in all haste to Potsdam. The King's continued illness rendered the appointment of a Regent imperative, and on October 23 the King signed a decree appointing his brother, the Prince of Prussia, to the post of Regent for a term of three months.

On October 29 the appointment of Chief of the Staff, which had become vacant through the death of General von Reyher, was conferred upon Major-General von Moltke, and consequently his connection with the Prince came to an end. When Moltke announced his transference the Prince wrote sorrowfully :

‘MY DEAR MAJOR-GENERAL,

‘These three years will never be forgotten by me. I cannot tell whether the laurels of the conquering warrior, which the soldier Moltke referred to in his wise instructions near the Katzbach and Leuthen, are destined for me in the future, but I hope with the greater certainty to obtain the citizen's crown of olive branches for the arts of peace which the philosopher



Moltke pointed out to me. Farewell; a sincerely grateful Telemachus parts from his never-to-be-forgotten Mentor.'

When the Prince of Prussia assumed the Regency, the duties of his son increased. Until then he had only been called upon to represent the sovereign or his father upon special occasions, or as patron of public institutions; but now other important business devolved upon him.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE ROYAL WEDDING

1858

THE marriage contract between the Princess Royal and Prince Frederick William was signed in London in December, 1857. The foreign royal wedding guests arrived in London about the middle of January: the Prince\* and Princess of Prussia; the Princes Albrecht, Frederick Charles, Frederick Albrecht, and Prince Adalbert of Prussia; the King of the Belgians with his two sons, the Duke of Brabant and the Count of Flanders; the Duke and Duchess of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, the Prince of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, Prince William of Baden, Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, the Prince of Leiningen, and the Prince of Hohenlohe-Langenburg.

Prince Frederick William had decided to start for London on the evening of January 21.

Naturally, he was the subject of conversation everywhere. The criticism which France made upon the approaching marriage, regarding it from a political point of view, gave rise to the following official state-

\* Afterwards the first German Emperor.

ment from the Prussian Ambassador at the Frankfort Diet, Herr von Bismarck :

‘ FRANKFORT-A.-M.,

‘ *January 22, 1858.*

‘ . . . My French colleague is not free from anxiety concerning the extent and the heartiness of the rejoicings in Prussia at the marriage of the young Prince. Similar sentiments also find expression in the semi-official Parisian newspaper correspondence. The French have not got a very clear idea of our relations between Prince and people, nor of German family life even in the highest circles. The presence of the whole Royal family in London impresses them with the idea of a political demonstration, and Prussia’s interest in its future Queen appears to them to be an unfettered outbreak of national sympathy for England.

‘ The absence of my English colleague from here, and there being no festive demonstration in honour of the day on the part of England in consequence, gives occasion for some remark. He is in London, and perhaps returns on Monday.’

The Emperor Napoleon III. had already given repeated proofs of his warm interest in the marriage of the Princess Royal. On the occasion of the wedding he wrote to Queen Victoria :

‘ . . . I regret extremely having to trouble Your Majesty with so serious and absorbing a subject\* at a time when I should only desire to write of the happy sensation which I experience at the thought that your

\* Three days previous the bomb outrage upon the Emperor had been committed by Orsini.

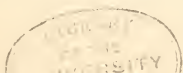
mother's heart will soon be gladdened. I venture also to request Your Majesty to express to the Princess Royal my heartfelt congratulations upon her marriage. Our sincerest good wishes will be with her and with you on the 25th.'

The following extract from a letter written about this time by Herr von Bismarck to his friend, General von Gerlach, who shared his sentiments, gives evidence of the views current in Prussian Conservative circles with regard to the union of Prince Frederick William and the Princess Royal :

'You ask me in your letter what I have to say to the English marriage. In order to give my opinion, I shall have to separate the two words. I do not care for the English part of it, but the marriage itself may be quite a good one, for the Princess is praised as a lady of culture and heart ; and one of the first conditions in this life, which enables one to do one's duty to the world, be it as King or as subject, is for the wife to be free from all that which constitutes opposition of mind and heart, as well as from the consequences of that opposition.'

The wedding-rings for the Prince and Princess had been made in Breslau of Silesian gold.

The Prince's departure took place on the day appointed, and he arrived at Dover on January 23 in the morning, after a good crossing. A guard of honour with a band awaited him on the landing-stage, and escorted him to the Lord Warden Hotel amidst the cheering of the crowd. The Prussian Ambassador, Count von Bernstorff, Prince Reuss, Count Brandenburg, and Baron von Langen, had travelled to Dover from London to welcome the Prince.



The Prince was received at the station in London by the Prince Consort, the Prince of Wales, and Prince Alfred, and reached Buckingham Palace at one o'clock. He was greeted in the great hall of the palace by his father, and, taking his arm, he proceeded to the Queen and the Princess Royal, who were awaiting him. The Prince's suite consisted of General Roth von Schreckenstein, Major-General von Moltke, Rittmeister von Lindern, Major von Schweinitz, and Lieutenant von Zastrow.

On the evening after the Prince's arrival the Queen was received in the theatre with the heartiest cheers; and upon repeated calls for 'The Princess! the Princess!' Her Majesty, leading her daughter and Prince Frederick William, appeared in the front of the box, and the bridal pair were greeted by the audience with a burst of cheers.

The state ball given on the 20th at Buckingham Palace, to which more than a thousand guests were invited, was most brilliant, but nevertheless these days of rejoicing had their touch of sadness for Queen Victoria. On the day the Court left Windsor the following entry occurs in her diary:

'We went to look at the rooms prepared for Vicky's honeymoon. Very pretty. The sight of them excited me very much. Poor, poor child! . . . We took a short walk with Vicky, who feels this epoch in her life, the actual parting with her childhood, so terribly keenly. For the last time she slept in the same room with Alice. . . . All that is at an end now.

'*Saturday, January 23.*—Fine; frost. Much excitement; but I feel calm. . . . Such bustle, such questions, and Albert torn to pieces. Latish walk in the

garden with Albert and our dear child. Beautiful day. . . . Albert went before one to fetch Fritz, who had landed at half-past ten o'clock, and at half-past one he arrived with an escort (as have all the other visitors), and all the Court waiting for him below. I received him at the bottom of the stairs very warmly; he was pale and nervous. At the top of the stairs Vicky received him with Alice, and we went into the Audience Room.

'*January 24.*—Poor dear Vicky's last unmarried day; an eventful one, reminding me so much of mine. . . . After breakfast we arranged in the large drawing-room the gifts (splendid ones) for Vicky on two tables—Mamma's and ours on one; Fritz's, his parents', King's and Queen's (of Prussia), uncle's and Ernest's and Alexandrine's (Duchess of Coburg), on the other. . . . Fritz's pearls are the largest I ever saw, one row. On the third table were three candelabra, our gift to Fritz. The Prince and Princess of Prussia, the children, mamma, William, all the Princes (except two of the Prussian ones), and ourselves, brought in Fritz and Vicky. She was in ecstasies, quite startled, and Fritz was delighted. . . . Service at half-past eleven. The Bishop of Oxford (Wilberforce) preached a fine sermon.'

On coming home from a walk, the Queen adds:

'We went again to the present-room, where we found more fine gifts had been placed, many from ladies, including a quantity of work. From the Duchess of Buccleuch a splendid case with table ornaments set with coral . . . from the Gentlemen of the Household a beautiful diamond and emerald bracelet, etc., etc. Very busy. Interrupted and disturbed every

instant. Dear Vicky gave me a brooch (a very pretty one) before church with her hair, and, clasping me in her arms, said, "I hope to be worthy to be your child." "

St. James's Palace, which was filled with so many historical memories, was chosen as the scene of the wedding ceremony.

We gather what Queen Victoria's feelings were on the wedding-day from her diary :

' *Monday, January 25.*—The second most eventful day in my life as regards feelings. I felt as if I were being married over again myself, only much more nervous, for I had not that blessed feeling which I had then, which raises and supports one, of giving myself up for life to him whom I loved and worshipped—then and ever! . . . Got up, and while dressing dearest Vicky came to see me, looking well and composed, and in a fine, quiet frame of mind. She had slept more soundly and better than before. This relieved me greatly. . . . Gave her a pretty book, called "The Bridal Offering." '\*

Towards noon the Queen went to the Chapel Royal accompanied by a flourish of trumpets. The procession was headed by high officials of the House; then came the two Kings-at-Arms, the Lord Privy Seal, the Lord President of the Privy Council, the Lord Chancellor, and the Hereditary Grand Marshal, the Duke of Norfolk. Immediately in front of the Queen came the First Lord of the Treasury, Viscount Palmerston, bearing the Sword of State. The Queen was surrounded by her children. After her followed

\* These and the following notes by Queen Victoria are taken from Sir Theodore Martin's 'Life of Prince Albert,' vol. iv.

the Master of the Horse, the Duke of Wellington, and the Mistress of the Robes, the Duchess of Sutherland. When the Queen had taken her place upon the throne, the Gentlemen of the Household returned to the state rooms of St. James's Palace to conduct the royal bridegroom. Prince Frederick William, accompanied by his father on his right hand and Prince Albrecht\* on his left, appeared in the uniform of a Prussian General; he had only that morning been promoted to Major-General *à la suite* of the 1st Infantry Regiment of Guards. When near the altar, Prince Frederick William stood still near the Queen's seat and bowed low, then did the same to his mother, and knelt down in silent prayer on the steps of the altar. In solemn silence the bride entered the chapel, leaning on her father's arm, and escorted by King Leopold, who walked on her right. She looked pale and agitated, and one could see the lace handkerchief in her left hand tremble violently. The bridal robe was trimmed with myrtle and orange blossoms; a bunch of flowers adorned her belt; and her train of heavy rich satin, three yards in length, trimmed with two rows of lace and flowers, was carried by bridesmaids, walking two and two, beautifully dressed in white silk and lace, trimmed with red roses and white heather.

Before the bride reached the altar, she too, like the Prince, stood still before the Queen and curtsied deeply, her cheeks for a moment being suffused by a deep blush. She then advanced to the Prince of Prussia to do homage in the same way, upon which

\* According to General von Moltke, it was Prince Frederick Charles.



the bridegroom came forward, dropped on one knee before her, and, with a look of deep affection, pressed her hand to his heart. Both then moved to the places at the altar which were assigned to them.

The clergy had in the meanwhile appeared at the altar—first the Archbishop of Canterbury as Primate of the English Church, then the Bishops of London, Oxford, Chester, the Deans of Windsor and of the Chapel Royal. A hymn, chosen by Prince Albert, was then sung, and the marriage service proceeded according to the rites of the Church of England. The Prince pronounced the responses so clearly and distinctly that they could be heard in the whole chapel. The Hallelujah Chorus concluded the service, and with it the strict Court ceremonial also ended. Just as the Heralds had taken their places, two and two together, in order to escort the Court from the chapel, the bride, who could no longer control her feelings, hastened towards her mother and embraced her with tears. Again and again the Queen embraced her dear child, and wept with her, even after the Princess had torn herself away from her to turn to her father. Prince Frederick William, who had embraced his young wife twice immediately after the blessing, then advanced to his mother, who threw her arms round him, while his father also embraced him with much emotion.

The Queen was the first to recover self-possession ; she walked, or rather flew, across to the Princess of Prussia, and embraced her with great tenderness, and shook hands with the Prince of Prussia. He stooped to kiss her hand, but the Queen did not permit this, and turned her cheek to him for a kiss



instead. Prince Frederick William was standing at her side, and shook hands warmly with his father-in-law.

From St. James's Palace everyone returned to Buckingham Palace, and while the Court were at lunch the crowd outside called loudly for the bride and bridegroom. The folding doors of the large central hall then opened, and the Royal couple appeared on the balcony, first alone and then with their parents, brothers, and sisters; each time they were received with loud cheers.

About five o'clock the young couple took leave of their parents and relations and started for Windsor, where all kinds of preparations had been made for their reception. Stands had been erected on the station platform, from which the arrival of the Prince and Princess could be seen, and about one hundred Eton boys had taken possession of one. There was no lack of banners and laurel wreaths, and in large brightly-shining letters the motto *Congratulatur Etona* gleamed in the setting sun. A second stand was occupied by ladies and gentlemen from Windsor and the neighbourhood.

The Prince and Princess arrived about six o'clock, and were greeted by tremendous cheering. When the train stopped, the Prince immediately alighted and gave the Princess his hand. Their appearance on the platform was the signal for renewed demonstrations of loyalty, the Eton boys being especially noticeable for their enthusiasm. The Prince, having shaken hands with some of the most prominent persons on the platform, and having spoken a few friendly words to them, escorted his young wife into the Queen's waiting-room.

The horses which had drawn the carriage to the station were unharnessed by the Eton boys, who drew and pushed it to the Royal Castle.

The *Times* published the following article on the wedding-day :

‘ A very simple and rough enumeration of the facts will serve to show that this is something else than what we may find any day in the *Court Circular*. Since England emerged from the Wars of the Roses there have been only half a dozen occasions as that of this day. The marriage of the Princess Charlotte we all remember too well. Eighteen years since we had another royal wedding. Heaven only knows how much we may owe to it our present prosperity, and the security with which we all look forward to the future fortune of the British Throne. One result we see to-day, and it cannot be called a trifling one. . . . We only trust and pray that the policy of England and of Prussia may never present any painful alternatives to the Princess now about to leave our shores ; that she will never be called on to forget the land of her birth, education, and religion ; and that, should the occasion ever occur, she may have the wisdom to render what is due both to her new and her old country. . . . There is no European State but what changes and is still susceptible of change, nor is this change wholly by any internal law of development. We influence one another. England, indeed, has ever been jealous of foreign influence, and she would be the last to repudiate the honour of influencing her neighbours. For our part, we are confident enough of our country to think an English Princess a gain to a Prussian Court, but not so confident to deny that we

may be mutually benefited, and Europe through us, by a greater cordiality and better acquaintance than has hitherto been between the two countries.'

Prince Frederick William was invested on January 28 with the Order of the Garter in St. George's Hall, Windsor Castle. Besides the twenty-six English knights, the Order of the Garter can only be conferred on foreign crowned heads; a special announcement had, therefore, to be made in the Chapter of the Order that Prince Frederick William of Prussia was eligible as a descendant of King George I. of Great Britain.

Next day the newly married couple received an address of congratulation from the Lord Mayor, the Sheriffs, the Town Council, and the representatives of the Corporation of London, which was read aloud by the Recorder. On the same day the Queen had invited the representatives of the aristocracy to St. James's Palace to present their congratulations. General von Moltke, writing to his wife from London, on Saturday, February 2, thus refers to the festivities:\*

'I was again very comfortably quartered at Windsor in my old turret. The Prince was decorated with the Order of the Garter, but it was done without any special ceremony. Since that occasion we have been again in London, where fêtes, operas, concerts, balls and drawing-rooms have quite occupied our time.

'Many handsome and gorgeous presents from various manufacturing towns have been handed over by deputations. The Prince was installed as a member of the Guild of Fishmongers, which is now 1,200 years old. Very pleasant indeed was the

\* Moltke's Letters to his Wife, vol. ii., p. 90.

occasion of a visit by a deputation from the City of London. The young Princess read her reply in a most admirable manner, so simple, from the heart, and with such a clear, full-toned voice, that an involuntary "sensation" went through the assembly, and the "old flaxen wigs" felt tears coming to their eyes. Everyone who heard her could not help liking her. I am perfectly certain that she will be a great favourite among us.'

Congratulatory addresses were presented by deputations from many towns of the British Empire, and in many instances were accompanied by handsome presents. Thus, a deputation from the Town Council of Birmingham sent a number of wedding gifts, the products of the industry of that town, which were valued at £2,000 sterling. The following were among the most costly of the many wedding presents: A diamond tiara from the King and Queen of Prussia; a diamond necklace and three diamond brooches of the same design from Queen Victoria, who also gave the young couple three massive and artistically modelled silver candelabras, the centre one being about four feet in height. The Prince Consort gave a bracelet set with diamonds and emeralds. The bride received another, formed of the same jewels, from the Gentlemen of the Royal Household. The jewels given by the Prince of Wales were exceedingly costly, consisting of a necklace, brooch and earrings of diamonds and opals of unusual beauty. The bridegroom's present was, however, the most valuable of all; it was a necklace of pearls so large in size that thirty-six sufficed to go round the throat easily, and of these the three middle ones were the finest of their

kind. The gifts from the Prince and Princess of Prussia were also truly regal—a necklace of diamonds and a neck ornament set with turquoises of rare beauty. Each of the bride's four younger sisters gave a brooch of the same pattern, but set respectively with diamonds, rubies, emeralds and sapphires.

In accordance with Court etiquette, several English Ministers and other dignitaries also received gifts. Lord Clarendon, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, should, according to the foreign custom, have received a snuff-box with a portrait, as he was the chief signatory of the marriage articles. As the English law does not permit any State official or Minister to receive or accept any distinction for services rendered to the State, Lord Clarendon could not accept an official present. Prince Albert, however, considered that it would be suitable for the bridegroom to give his lordship a souvenir such as would not have the appearance of a sum of money, in the shape of a costly article, but which might be characterized purely as a gift of personal kind feelings, and a life-sized portrait of the bridegroom seemed to the Prince to be most suitable for such a purpose. When Lord Clarendon, some time after the marriage, was informed by the Prussian Ambassador, Count Bernstorff, that His Majesty intended, in spite of this, to present him with a pair of valuable vases, he received this communication with gratitude, and jokingly remarked that he hoped that the vases were not of too great value, so that they might not give rise to the remark that he had sold England to Prussia.\* A

\* Private letter of Count Bernstorff to Minister von Manteuffel, March 4, 1858.

private gift was also considered suitable by Prince Albert for the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had performed the ceremony. Prince Frederick William decided on a Bible, and had a large folio one printed by the Court printers, with the most beautiful lettering, and illustrated with engravings after Kaulbach. The cover had massive silver clasps in Old German style, and the book weighed some seventy-seven pounds.

The departure of the Prince and Princess had been fixed for February 2, and they left Buckingham Palace about noon on that day. The Queen, with her ladies, and the chief officials of the Household, escorted them as far as the great outer hall. A troop of Horse Guards rode in advance; then followed the bride and bridegroom with the Prince Consort and the Prince of Wales. Many hundreds of flags displayed good wishes, and hearty cheers rose from thousands of throats.

At Gravesend, the last place at which the Princess with her husband stood on English soil, two gaily decorated fir-trees had been placed at one of the crossings; at another there was a triumphal arch, with the words, 'Farewell, Fair Rose of England,' and 'We give her to your care.' All the streets as far as the landing-stage were decked with flags and garlands, and at the landing-stage itself—which consists of a roomy hall with pillars, extending far into the river—seats were arranged for 1,200 people. In the centre of the hall the Lord Mayor presented a congratulatory address. On the bridge sixty young girls scattered flowers. A salute resounded from the river when the young couple, accompanied by Prince Albert, the

Prince of Wales and Prince Alfred, went on board the *Victoria and Albert*. The appearance of the Prince Consort, in spite of his efforts to look cheerful, revealed how much he felt the pang of parting from his beloved daughter. When the anchor chains of the yacht were drawn up, weather-beaten fishermen still crowded round in their boats, and called all kinds of injunctions to Prince Frederick William: 'Keep her well!' 'Be true to her!' 'God bless you for it!'

As the paddle-wheels of the yacht began to move, the guns of Tilbury Fort and the opposite heights thundered a salute. Prince Frederick William had, before leaving, sent a beautiful gold snuff-box, with his monogram set in diamonds, to the Lord Mayor, Sir John Key, through the Prussian Ambassador, Count von Bernstorff, as a mark of recognition for the manner in which he had carried out the wishes of the Common Council of London by conferring upon the Prince the Freedom of the City. The Princess had, in a suitable and thoughtful way, provided presents for all the ladies and servants of the Court.

The royal yacht, escorted by the convoys, left the mouth of the Thames about two o'clock in the morning, *en route* for the Continent.

Queen Victoria writes in her diary, February 2: 'Wretched day. A dull, quiet, thick morning. Got up with a heavy heart. Went over to dear Vicky's room, to fetch her for the last time. Struggled with all my might against my sad feelings. . . . About a quarter to eleven Vicky came, with a very sad face, to my room. Here we embraced each other tenderly, and our tears flowed fast; then we recovered for a time.



Albert joined us. We tried to talk of other things.' (The Princess then dressed for her journey.) 'And now the dreadful time was at hand. We all went into the Audience Room, where were Mamma and all the children. . . . I still struggled, but as I came to the stairs my breaking heart gave way. My beloved Albert most kindly said he grieved so much to leave me. I went first, followed by Vicky and Fritz. The hall was full of all our people and their people (including Lady Churchill and Lord Sydney, who accompanied them to Berlin). Many of the servants also there, and I do not think there was a dry eye. Poor, dear child! . . . I clasped her in my arms and blessed her, and knew not what to say. I kissed good Fritz, and pressed his hand again and again. He was unable to speak, and the tears were in his eyes. I embraced them both again at the carriage door, and Albert got into the carriage, an open one, with them, and Bertie, Alfred and George (Duke of Cambridge) were in the next. The band struck up. I wished good-bye to the good Perponchers. General Schreckenstein was much affected. I pressed his hand and the good Dean's (of Windsor), and then went quickly upstairs.

'A dreadful moment and a dreadful day. Such sickness came over me, when I thought of our dearest child being gone for so long, all, all being over! . . . It began to snow before Vicky went, and continued to do so without intermission all day. . . . At times I could be quite cheerful, but my tears began to flow afresh frequently, and I could not go near Vicky's corridor. Everything recalled the time now past—all programmes, dinner lists, etc., lying about still, as



if all were yet going on—and all, all over, such desolation. . . .

‘At four my beloved Albert returned, with the two boys, very sad, and my grief again burst forth. The separation had been terrible. . . . Albert seemed much impressed by it; nothing could exceed the loyalty, enthusiasm and feeling shown by the countless thousands in the City, and again at Gravesend, where the decorations were beautiful. Young girls with wreaths, in spite of the snow, walked on the pier, strewing flowers. . . .

‘Albert waited to see the ship leave—what a moment it must have been!—but Vicky did not come on deck. Rested and felt very low.’

On February 3 the royal couple arrived at Antwerp, on their way to Brussels, but their stay at the Belgian Court was not of long duration. At Verviers they were waited on by a deputation of the Town Council and the directors of the Rhenish Railway.

When the Prussian frontier was reached, at Herbesthal, the train was met by the Lord High Steward, Count von Redern, who had arrived from Berlin for the purpose of welcoming the British Princess upon Prussian soil in the King’s name. Many other officials, as well as the British Ambassador, were also present on the platform.

At Cologne addresses were presented on the station platform by the Mayor and the Town Council, after which the Prince and Princess, amidst the chiming of the bells and the cheers of the people, went to the Cathedral, which was beautifully illuminated. The Cardinal Archbishop gave an address, referring to the

Prince's sojourn at the Rhenish University of Bonn, and, in wishing every blessing to their union, he concluded by saying 'that such wishes, spoken in the sacred precincts of the Cathedral, were prayers sent up to the Almighty for their preservation, as well as for the safety of the whole Royal House.'

At Hanover the King, accompanied by the Dukes of Brunswick and Altenburg, received the royal guests. During dinner the King conferred upon the Prince the Order of St. George, and gave the Princess his portrait in medallion, to be worn on the left shoulder on the ribbon of the Guelphic Order.

The Prince and Princess were welcomed on February 6 at Brandenburg by Field-Marshal von Wrangel on behalf of the army, and by the President of the Province of Brandenburg. The journey was then continued to Potsdam, which was reached in the afternoon. Their reception was extremely enthusiastic, the Prince of Prussia embracing his son as well as his youthful daughter-in-law with much feeling. At the entrance to the railway-station, where the Prince and Princess were received with a flourish of trumpets, a guard of honour was in attendance; the National Anthem was sung by the choirs of the guilds and corporations, and as soon as they had entered the carriage the procession started for the royal castle.

The journey to Berlin was resumed by carriage on February 8, a halt being made on the way at Castle Bellevue, where the King and Queen had gone to welcome the young couple. The King advanced to meet the Princess at the stairs. When she was about to stoop to kiss his hand, he embraced her and ex-

claimed with much feeling, 'How nice it is that you are here at last!'

From an early hour in the morning the various guilds, headed by bands, with flags and emblematic banners, had entered the town of Berlin, and taken up the places assigned to them along the route as far as the royal palace. The Guild of Butchers, as well as those tradesmen who, according to an ancient privilege, were permitted to appear on horseback and head the procession on such occasions, also took up their position. The cavalcade started from Castle Bellevue about one o'clock and reached the Brandenburg Gate, where Field-Marshal von Wrangel advanced to welcome the Prince and Princess in the name of the troops stationed at Berlin. It then proceeded as far as the first of the stands erected along the route, where another halt was made, and the members of the Town Council, headed by the Mayor, presented an address. The Princess, wearing a diamond crown on her head and an ermine mantle on her shoulders, repeatedly acknowledged the salutations by bowing. The procession now once more advanced towards the castle, followed by all the various guilds, and by twenty-four Marshals, bearing the magnificent new banner of the city.

At the state banquet in the White Hall the Prince of Prussia proposed a toast for the happy alliance between Great Britain and Prussia, and for the happiness of the young couple. In the evening Prince Frederick William and his wife once more drove through the town to view the illuminations.

During the following days they received innumerable deputations from all parts of the country, bearing

the congratulations of corporations, towns, and villages. The wedding present from the town of Berlin consisted of a vase with a stand, placed on a so-called state table, and two candelabra, made of pure silver. The clergy of Berlin presented a Bible, and from this arose the custom for the clergy to give to each newly-married couple in the capital a copy of the Holy Writ.

On February 11 Prince Albert wrote as follows to his daughter :

‘ You have now entered upon your new home, and been received and welcomed on all sides with the greatest friendship and cordiality. This kindly and trustful advance of a whole nation towards an entire stranger must have kindled and confirmed within you the determination to show yourself in every way worthy of such feelings, and to reciprocate and requite them by the steadfast resolution to dedicate the whole energies of your life to this people of your new home. You have also received from Heaven the happy task of effecting this object by making your husband truly happy, and of doing him, at the same time, the best service by aiding him to maintain and to increase the love of his countrymen. That you have everywhere made so favourable an impression has given intense pleasure to me as a father. Let me express my fullest admiration of the way in which, loyal to the duty exclusively which you had to fulfil, you have kept down and overcome your own little personal troubles, perhaps also many feelings of sorrow not yet healed. This is the way to success, and the only way. If you have succeeded in winning people’s hearts by friendliness, simplicity, and courtesy, the secret lay in this,

that you were not thinking of yourself. Hold fast to this mystic power ; it is a spark from Heaven.

‘To Him who has shaped everything so happily, I am grateful from the very depths of my soul for the happy climax to the most important period of your life. Dear child, I would fain have liked to be in the crowd to see your entrance, and to hear what the multitude said of you ; and so, too, would your mamma. We are, however, kept admirably informed of everything by the telegraph, the post, and the papers. The telegraph wires must have been amazed when they flashed : “The whole Royal Family is enchanted with my wife.—F. W.”’\*

Amongst the tasks which the Prince Consort had set the Princess Royal in the studies for her new position was the translation of a pamphlet entitled “Karl August und die Deutsche Politik,” by J. G. Droysen, which had appeared on the occasion of the Goethe-Schiller Festival at Weimar on September 3, 1857. This essay was in every way a remarkable one for the condensed force with which it dealt with the past policy of Germany, and advocated a policy for the future which, being at once liberal and national, might give to the German race a fitting position amongst the States of Europe. It was full of thoughts to nurse the right ambition of one destined to become the future Sovereign of a great people. But the intellect of a girl not yet seventeen must have been developed in no ordinary degree for the Prince to feel assured that she could enter so thoroughly into the ideas of the writer as to put them into adequate

\* Telegram from Prince Frederick William to his parents-in-law.

English. With a natural pride, he sent the Princess's translation to Lord Clarendon to read, and on February 16 received an acknowledgment, in which his lordship said :

‘The fact of its being translated by the Princess Royal made me suspend all other occupations in order to read it, which I have done with peculiar interest, for I felt all the time that the being engaged in works which convey knowledge and stimulate inquiry and demand reflection has, under the guidance of Your Royal Highness, made the Princess what she is. Her manner, which charms everybody, would not be what it is if it were not the reflection of a highly-cultivated intellect, which, with a well-trained imagination, leads to the saying and doing of right things in right places.

‘In reading Droysen, I felt that the motto of Prussia should be *Semper eadem*, and in thinking of his translator I felt that she is destined to change that motto into the *Vigilanda ascendimus* of Weimar.

‘These were no words of flattery, and a remark of the Prince Consort's to his son-in-law, that the Princess Royal “had a man's head and a child's heart,” the “in wit a man, simplicity a child,” of the poet, was soon confirmed by the report of many a shrewd observer in Germany. One of these wrote to the Prince some weeks after her arrival in Berlin: “She sees more clearly and more correctly than many a man of commanding intellect, because, while possessing an acute mind and the purest heart, she does not know “prejudice.”’\*

The correspondence of a father with such a daughter

\* Sir Theodore Martin's ‘Life of Prince Albert,’ vol. iv.

could not be an ordinary one. All the thoughts and experience which the tenderest love could inspire were placed at her disposal. During that critical time when, after all the excitement and adulation of the last months, a reaction might be expected, the Prince wrote admirable words of warning and encouragement :

‘ February 17, 1858.

‘ Your festival time, if not your honeymoon, comes to an end to-day, and on this I take leave to congratulate you, unfeeling though it may sound : for I wish for you the necessary time and tranquillity to digest the many impressions you have received, and which otherwise, like a first revel, first inflame, then stupefy, leaving dull, nerveless lassitude behind. Your exertions and the demands which have been made upon you have been quite immense ; you have won all hearts, or what one calls the hearts, of all. In the nature of things we may now expect a little reaction. The public, just because it was rapturous and enthusiastic, will now become minutely critical, and take you to pieces anatomically. This is to be kept in view, although it need cause you no uneasiness, for you have followed your natural bent, and have made no external demonstration (*nichts äusserlich affichirt*) which did not answer to the truth of your inner nature. It is only the man who presents an artificial demeanour (*Wesen*) to the world who has to dread being unmasked.

‘ . . . Your place is that of being your husband's wife and your mother's daughter. You will desire nothing else, but you will also forego nothing of that which you owe to your husband and to your mother. Ultimately your mind will, from the over-excitement,



fall back to a little lassitude and sadness. But this will make you feel a craving for activity, and you have much to do. . . . To success in the affairs of life apportionment of time is essential, and I hope you will make this your first care, so that you may always have some time over for the fulfilment of every duty.'

## CHAPTER V

### THE ACCESSION AND CORONATION OF KING WILLIAM I. AND THE APPOINTMENT OF THE BISMARCK MINISTRY

1858—1862

THE newly-married Prince and Princess spent the first months of their married life in the Royal Castle at Berlin, as the alterations and restoration of the palace intended for them, which had been inhabited by King Frederick William III. until his death, were not yet completed.

From the first the palace of the Prince and Princess became the home of art and science. Soon after his marriage, Prince Frederick William had introduced his former mathematical tutor, Professor Schellbach, to his wife.

‘The first words,’ Schellbach writes,\* ‘which the Princess addressed to me, with the greatest amiability, were: “I love mathematics, physics and chemistry.” I was much gratified, for I saw how kindly the Prince must have spoken to her about me. Under the guidance of her highly educated father, who had himself studied natural science, Princess Victoria had

\* ‘My Reminiscences of the Crown Prince Frederick William of Prussia,’ by Professor Schellbach, Breslau, 1890.

become acquainted with this science, and had even received her first instruction from such renowned teachers as Faraday and Hoffmann.

‘Our beloved Crown Princess early manifested her love for art and science, as well as her delight in creating problems of her own. Her Royal Highness at first endeavoured to continue her studies in physics and mathematics under my direction, but soon her artistic work absorbed the remnant of time which the demands of Court life left to her.

‘Soon after the marriage I had tried to interest His Royal Highness in the idea that greater importance should in future be attached to the study of mathematics and physics in the curriculum of the upper classes of the higher schools. The Minister of Education was asked, with reference to this matter, to form a Commission to find out how far such an idea would be feasible and suitable. Our Crown Prince was kind enough to take an active part in the discussions, as I gathered from the following note from him :

“‘I have just arranged with the Minister of Education that the conference with reference to the teaching of mathematics and science in schools shall be held in the Ministerial buildings on Friday next at twelve o’clock, and I intend to be present myself. Therefore be prepared!’”

Unfortunately, this conference did not lead to the result desired by the Prince and the Professor.

The Prince was more successful in his endeavour to secure the recognition and admission of English Freemasons, who happened to be of the Jewish faith, as visitors to Prussian Lodges, a right which had hitherto been denied them.

With the arrival of the warm weather, the Prince and Princess took up their residence at Castle Babelsberg, and there they had the pleasure during the first days of June of receiving a visit of several days' duration from the Prince Consort. Prince Albert wrote to Queen Victoria on June 4 :

'Fritz met me this morning at Grossbeeren, and about nine I reached Babelsberg, where Vicky and the Prince received me. . . . The relation between the young people is all that can be desired. . . . I have had long talks with them singly and together, which gave me the greatest satisfaction.'

A visit from Queen Victoria and her husband at Babelsberg on August 12, for a stay of some length, was a joyful event for the Prince and Princess. Prince Frederick William travelled as far as Magdeburg to meet the royal visitors. The Prince Regent and his wife spared no efforts to pay due honour to their guests. Queen Victoria's diary gives a detailed account of this visit.\* In it she says of Field-Marshal Wrangel and Minister von Manteuffel :

'Wrangel is seventy-six, and a great character. He was full of Vicky and the marriage; said she was an angel; called me *meine liebe Königin*; and said I looked *als ob Sie zum Tanze gingen* (as if you were going to a ball). Manteuffel was most unpleasant, cross, and disagreeable.'

In a letter to Baron von Stockmar, the Prince Consort says of the Prince Regent ;

'I had an opportunity of gaining a clear insight into his nature, and of finding that he deserves far

\* Compare Theodore Martin, 'The Life of Prince Albert,' vol. iv., pp. 286-306.

more consideration, esteem, and confidence than is evinced by the majority of persons who surround him. When he expounded to me his views concerning Prussia's policy with reference to a neighbouring State (Austria), I found they were so sensible, so simple, so sincere and honourable, that I kissed his hand.'

About Prince Frederick William he writes :

'He is firm in his constitutional principles, and despises the Ministry. The coolness with which the Crown Prince and the Ministers (Manteuffel and his colleagues) met was obvious.'

The population of Potsdam and Berlin manifested a hearty interest in the parents of the princely couple, and gave them an enthusiastic reception. Queen Victoria assured Burgomaster Naunyn, of Berlin, that she felt exceedingly happy there, because she had realized with what love and devotion everyone was attached to the Royal House and to her daughter. It had been a real delight to her to hear of the hearty reception which had been accorded to her daughter by the town of Berlin upon her entry ; but she also rejoiced over the many proofs of sympathy which the town had shown upon every occasion when she had visited it. This had deeply touched her, and she would never forget the happy days which she had spent in Berlin.

The royal guests left Prussia on August 28.

A year had passed since the serious illness of King Frederick William IV., and since Prince William of Prussia had acted as his representative. Having now gained sufficient experience, the Prince declared that he could only continue to act as the King's representative on condition that he received the full powers

of a Regent. On October 7 a royal decree was published, in which the King called upon his brother 'to exercise the royal authority to the best of his ability as Regent with sole responsibility towards God.' On October 26 the Prince Regent took the oath unconditionally in the presence of his son and the assembled Prussian Landtag in the White Drawing-room of the royal castle.

Everyone realized that with the commencement of this new era the Manteuffel Ministry, a compromise of irreconcilable elements, would come to an end. On November 8 the Prince Regent presented the new Liberal Ministry, of which Prince Charles Anthony of Hohenzollern was the President, to his son. On this occasion the Prince Regent made a speech which created a great sensation far beyond the borders of Prussia. In it he said, amongst other things, that there would be no question of a breach with the past, but that an improving hand should be applied where anything of the nature of despotism, or anything contrary to the demands of the times, manifested itself. 'We cannot deny that an orthodoxy has arisen in the Evangelical Church which is not consistent with its fundamental views, in consequence of which it has dissemblers amongst its followers. All hypocrisy—in fact, all Church matters which are employed as means to egoistic ends—must be exposed wherever it is possible. True religion is manifested in the whole conduct of a human being; this must ever be kept in view, and distinguished from outward appearances and display. . . . The world must know that Prussia is prepared to protect the right everywhere.'

After this introduction to the Ministry, Prince Frederick William for years regularly attended the meetings of the Ministry of State, and in the person of Privy-Councillor Brunnemann he had a member of the Council at his side whose task it was to keep him informed of the progress of State affairs.

In the meantime the palace, Unter den Linden, had been prepared for the Prince and Princess Frederick William, and on November 20 they moved into it. On the following day, the birthday of the Princess, the change of residence was consecrated by a service in the palace chapel, at which the Prince Regent and the Princess of Prussia, as well as all the Princes and Princesses, were present.

The happiness of the royal couple was crowned, on January 27, 1859, by the birth of a son, the now reigning German Emperor. This happy event was welcomed with unusual rejoicing and exceedingly friendly interest, not only in Berlin, but also in all parts of the Prussian Fatherland, and awakened no less interest in the Princess's own country. The solemn strains of the hymn 'Praise God, the mighty King of Hosts,' from the dome of the royal castle at five o'clock proclaimed the gratitude of the happy father.

In the evening the Prince Regent held a reception, about which Gustav zu Putlitz, then a member of the Prussian Landtag, wrote to his wife :\*

'It was like a great family festival; everyone crowded there with congratulations, and when the young father, radiant with happiness, appeared, the

\* 'Gustav zu Putlitz : a Life Picture,' by Elizabeth zu Putlitz, vol. i., p. 243.



rejoicing increased. This joy is shared by all classes of society, and bears witness to the extent of the popularity of the Crown Prince and Crown Princess.'

Prince Frederick William received the congratulations of the Upper and Lower House on January 29, and made the following reply :

'I thank you most heartily, gentlemen, for the interest which you have shown in the happy event, which is of such importance to my family and to the country, and I beg you to thank every member of the Upper House in my name. If God should preserve my son's life, it shall be my foremost endeavour to educate him in the opinions and sentiments which unite me to the Fatherland. To-day it is almost a year since I told you how deeply touched I was by the universal sympathy which was manifested towards me as a young married man by the whole country. It was this sympathy which made the Princess, my wife, who had left her home to come to the new Fatherland, appreciate that love and attachment which have now, through the birth of the son, become indissoluble. May God therefore bless our endeavours to bring up our son worthy of the love which has been so early shown towards him. The Princess, whom I was able to inform of your intention, desires me to express her sincerest thanks.'

The christening of the newborn Prince took place on March 5, when he received the names of Frederick William Victor Albert. The following public expression of thanks was issued by the royal parents on the same day :

'The birth of our son has been received in all parts of the country with sympathy that will never be

forgotten by us, just as the reception which greeted us just a year ago, when we were newly married, remains ineffaceable in our minds. We believe there can be no more suitable day on which to express to the whole country our most sincere and heartfelt thanks for all the countless proofs of joy which were expressed by the kind congratulations than to-day, upon which our child has received Holy Baptism. May we be enabled with the help of God to bring up our son to the honour and for the good of our beloved Fatherland.'

When war broke out between Austria and Italy, in June, 1859, the Prince Regent of Prussia ordered the army to prepare for war in order to protect the dignity of the Prussian State.

On May 14 the mobilization of the Guards, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th and 8th Army Corps, was ordered. On the same day Major-General Prince Frederick William of Prussia, commanding the 1st Infantry Brigade of Guards, was appointed to the command of the 1st Infantry Division of Guards during the war. But when the danger which threatened Prussia was over, and a peace effected between the belligerent Powers, the mobilization was rescinded (July 25, 1859). On the same day Major-General Prince Frederick William's promotion to command a division was confirmed by the Prince Regent, and he retained his former position as Commander of the 1st Infantry Division of Guards.

On November 7 the Prince and Princess Frederick William, with their suite, paid a visit to the Court of Great Britain in London, and were present at the coming of age of the Prince of Wales, on November 9.

As the accommodation at Babelsberg was now insufficient for the extended requirements of the Prince's household, the New Palace, near Potsdam, became their summer home. It was there that Princess Victoria was able to set the example of that helpful and happy country life which she had learned to value in England, so that it was not long before its simple domestic character became proverbial, and exercised a far-reaching influence.

Under her fostering hand, the old-fashioned pleasure-grounds and neglected gardens became a pattern of taste and arrangement. In their neighbouring farm at Bornstädt the Prince himself superintended every detail, and gained an insight into the management of land and labour, while the dairy and poultry-yard were the particular care of the Princess. The inhabitants of the neighbouring villages quickly learned to appreciate their kindly solicitude; domestic sanitation, care for the sick and aged among their tenants, schools, children's holidays, all engaged their sympathetic interest. One of the Prince's most striking characteristics was his love for the people, his genuine sympathy with the humbler walks of life. It was his special pleasure to visit the village school and listen to the children's lessons, and sometimes he would take the teacher's place and put the questions himself. It must have been on such an occasion that the pretty reply was given which is recorded in the following story :

'To what kingdom does this belong?' the Prince asked a little girl, touching a medal suspended to his chain. 'To the mineral kingdom,' was the answer. 'And this?' pointing to a flower. 'To the vegetable

kingdom.' 'And I, myself,' he asked, 'to what kingdom do I belong?' 'To the kingdom of Heaven,' was the child's reply.

Major von Bernhardi in his Diary\* refers to a lengthy conversation which Professor Geffken had with the Prince in January, 1860, in which the Professor explained to him that Prussia would be obliged to aim at the annexation of the smaller German States. Napoleon III. had already more than once offered Schleswig-Holstein to Prussia.

Strange to say, reactionary plans at that time were connected with the person of Prince Frederick William. Thus, we learn from a conversation between the Duke of Coburg and Theodor von Bernhardi on March 16, 1860, that the 'Junker' party would insist upon the resignation of the Regent if the military proposals were not carried, and that they entertained great hopes of bringing it about.

Since the Regent had sworn fidelity to the Constitution, the 'Junkers' were anxious to induce Prince Frederick William to assume the supreme power and grant privileges without the Constitution.

A special honour was done to the Prince when a battleship belonging to the British Navy, on being launched at Portsmouth on March 24, 1860, was named *Frederick William*. The vessel was christened

\* Theodor von Bernhardi, to whom repeated references are made in the 'Life of the Emperor Frederick,' was a distinguished Prussian historical writer and diplomatist. He was entrusted at different times with important missions in Italy, Spain, and Portugal. He enjoyed besides the confidence of the Prussian Royal Family to an exceptional degree. His recently published reminiscences form a valuable source of information concerning German political events of the latter half of the nineteenth century.

by Countess Bernstorff, the wife of the Prussian Ambassador.

In the month of June the Prince Regent, accompanied by his son and several Ministers, went to the Province of Prussia to be present at the opening of the Königsberg-Eydtkuhnen Railway. Two days after, on June 4, there was a parade of the whole Königsberg garrison under the command of Lieutenant-General von Steinmetz. The Regent and Prince Frederick William were approaching the 1st Infantry Regiment, when the former said to his son :

‘ Fritz, I appoint you to the 1st Infantry Regiment, the oldest corps in the service.’

At the march-past the regiment was led by its new commander, who on July 1 was promoted Lieutenant-General.

Soon after the Prince’s domestic happiness was further increased by the birth of a daughter, on July 24, who received the names of Victoria Elizabeth Augusta Charlotte.\*

The death of the Dowager Empress of Russia, Alexandra Feodorowna, on November 1, five years after the death of her husband, the Emperor Nicholas I., was a very sad loss to Prince Frederick William. She had in the truest sense of the word been a motherly friend to him up to the time of her death, and he, for his part, had always reciprocated the kindly feelings of his royal relative.

During the night of January 2, 1861, a peaceful death ended the long sufferings of King Frederick William IV. Prince Frederick William had always enjoyed the special favour of his uncle, and he now

\* The present Hereditary Princess of Saxe-Meiningen.

mourned the loss of a paternal friend. The Prince Regent ascended the Prussian Throne as King William I., and Prince Frederick William now became Crown Prince of Prussia.

The reorganization of the army which had been begun by King William I. as Prince Regent was completed on January 18, 1861, with the consecration of the colours of the newly-formed regiments in front of the well-known statue of Frederick the Great, Unter den Linden. The Crown Prince was in command of the troops ordered to be present at the ceremony.

While her husband was thus busily engaged with his new duties, the Crown Princess's artistic efforts gained full recognition from the Royal Academy of Arts in Berlin. In the middle of February she received a deputation of its members, and accepted their diploma as an honorary member.

During the years 1861 to 1866 the historian Privy Councillor Max Duncker was assigned to the Crown Prince as Reporting Councillor in State matters. Duncker by his previous life, which had been devoted to scientific research and patriotic labours, had made himself in every way thoroughly competent to assume the important task of being the political adviser to the Heir Apparent. He had attained distinction as Professor of History at the Universities of Halle and Tübingen, as a member of the Frankfort and Erfurt Parliament, as well as a Prussian deputy. He had also attracted the attention of King William during the "fifties," when he was one of the Prince of Prussia's secretaries.

A personal connection had existed between Prince

Frederick William and Max Duncker since the first months of the year 1860. All kinds of drafts of memorials and letters point to instructions given by the young Prince. The Crown Prince and Princess often saw Duncker and liked him. In this they followed the views of an old adviser to the English Royal Family, Baron Stockmar. It was at the end of November, 1860, that Stockmar summoned Max Duncker to him, as he had selected him as his successor in the guidance of the Prince. He now formally confided his own political post to Duncker, and discussed the Crown Prince and Princess with him. Duncker's relations with the Prince had by that time already become firmly established. He willingly acceded to the Prince's request that he would regularly communicate to him the course of public events, and he was pleased with the trust, the goodwill, and the earnest efforts with which the young Prince strove to understand and judge things impartially. The pleasure afforded him by the characters of the young Prince and of his lively and clever young wife, and his delight in teaching and guiding—which came so naturally to him—made it easier for him to bear the trials and the fruitless efforts of his other duties. Here it might be possible, perhaps, for him to sow a seed in silence, which might some day spring up—nay, was even now springing up in the deeper interests and the more important position of the Prince. Referring to the part taken by the Crown Prince in the Ministers' deliberations, Prince Charles Anthony of Hohenzollern, the President of the Ministry, said to Duncker in March, 1861: 'The Crown Prince is the only support of the Ministry; now that he has come into



contact with you, he has become quite a different being.'

It had seemed proper to King William after his accession to the throne to mark his assumption of the position as ruler by a ceremonial act. For weeks the opposing factions had been occupied with the question as to whether the oath of allegiance of the Estates would be compatible with the new constitutional law proposed by the King. The King at last decided in favour of the simple coronation, which was to take place at Königsberg on October 18, in the presence of the Landtag.

This decision induced the Crown Prince, who was at that time on a visit to the British Court with his family, to write the following letter, remarkable by its determined opposition to the King's views :

‘ OSBORNE,  
‘ July 5, 1861.

‘ MY DEAR FATHER,

‘ From your telegram, received to-day, we heard of the final solution of the long-pending question regarding the oath of allegiance, and I rejoice to hear that a settlement has at last been arrived at, and that, in consequence, your departure for the undisturbed enjoyment of the rest, so necessary to your health, is now practicable. Without doubt, the discussions during the last week must have been most painful, and I can imagine that the decision with regard to the coronation must have cost you an effort. As, however, no other course was possible without a rupture with the Ministers who enjoy your confidence, you will still regard as an evil the ceremony decided upon, and retain your former opinion, that the authority

of the Crown will be endangered by the omission of the traditional oath of allegiance. I will not discuss again my divergent view, with which you are acquainted, but instead I will make a request. It is that you will not regard the approaching coronation with repugnance. . . . What I want to say is this: that even if the coronation appears to you as an evil, it is nevertheless necessary to extract the good which it contains, and to take its good results into consideration. In the first place, the despotic act of assuming the crown of our ancestors is, just in our time, a solemn proof that it is not conferred by any earthly power, in spite of the many prerogatives which were abandoned in 1848.

‘Then, again, that solemn ceremony obliges all the great Powers to pay you homage, and, by the presence of their Ambassadors, to show Prussia their deference, after we have had to sacrifice much consideration and many advantages during the past years. For just as you gained for us fresh prestige as a great Power in Baden and in Teplitz, so you will, undoubtedly, by your coronation bring Prussia’s important position into prominence before the eyes of the world. Thus, that ceremony gains a political character, which gives it a solemn—nay, a sacred—significance. On account of this Berlin would certainly be more suitable for the coronation than Königsberg, which was in former times the capital of the small kingdom, while Berlin is now the capital of the entire great nation. The thought, too, might speak in favour of Berlin (apart from its grander associations), that just as Frederick I. by his coronation at Königsberg laid the foundation of a new State life, so you, dear father, as the founder

of a new form of government which opens up the way for our future, the defenders of the affairs of the united German territories, allow this important ceremony to take place in the centre of Prussia.

‘I consider it the more necessary, therefore, that you should go with mamma to Königsberg before the coronation in Berlin, in order to appear there, according to ancient custom, either for a large reception or to receive the oath of allegiance from the officials, Bishops, etc., before official ceremonies take place in the other provinces. Could this not be carried out immediately before the Rhenish manoeuvres? By this means any preparation which may already have been made in Königsberg would not have been made in vain.

‘I have ventured to express my views quite frankly, dear father, though my partiality for the coronation ceremony may, perhaps, surprise you. The matter is simply this, that I have often quietly considered this with Vicky as the only favourable issue, when I perceived the growing difficulties which rose up in your mind with regard to the oath of allegiance. Well knowing your aversion to enter into this question, I did not like to touch upon it before necessity required it. Moreover, I may add that my view on this point is fully shared here.

‘Finally, I call attention to the fact that at the coronation the whole country must be represented by witnesses; therefore, all the districts and large towns should send deputies. All commanding Generals ought, also, to appear, as well as the chairmen and presidents of the highest legal and scientific colleges.’

His advice was not accepted, for on October 18 the coronation of the King and Queen took place with much splendour at Königsberg, in the presence of the Princes and Princesses, the Ambassadors of foreign Courts, besides the aristocracy and the representatives of the nation. The Crown Prince assisted his father in the act of putting on the purple mantle, after the crown had been placed on his head, and as the first in the land he did homage by kissing the King's hand.

Upon this occasion the Crown Princess was appointed to the second colonelcy of the 2nd Hussars of the Guard.

The General Council of the Royal Albertus University at Königsberg had requested the Crown Prince to accept the office of Rector of the University, in place of Frederick William IV., who had held that position for half a century, first as Crown Prince and then as King. The Crown Prince acceded to the request, and on the day of the coronation he assumed his duties at the University of Königsberg. On the following day he was invested with the academic purple, on which occasion the Pro-Rector, Professor Rosenkranz, presented an address. The Crown Prince replied in an extemporary speech, saying that he felt proud that his ancestors had always proved themselves the protectors of learning, for which he, too, cherished the greatest veneration. He had not, it was true, been able to devote himself much to study at the University, like other students, but he had, nevertheless, not lost sight of learning since. He entered upon the rectorship of the University in the hope of being able to promote its further well-being.

The year 1861 was not to close without bringing the

deepest sorrow into the happy married life of the Royal couple, for on December 14 the Crown Princess lost her dearly-loved father. In him the Crown Prince lost an adviser, whose moderation and political insight he had always sincerely admired, and a paternal friend to whom he had always been united by the deepest attachment. The duty of representing the Prussian Court at the funeral of Prince Albert fell to the Crown Prince, and once again General von Moltke accompanied him to England.

In July, 1861, Baron von Schleinitz, weary of office, had retired from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Count von Bernstorff had been appointed as his successor. Owing to Schleinitz's retirement, the Ministers became less united, and were thus weakened in supporting the King, the democratic results of the elections of December 6, 1861, proving further that they possessed no support in the nation. It was the greatest shock which the Ministry of the new era had yet received. Some days after the election, by the Crown Prince's desire, Duncker drew up a rough memorandum, intended for the perusal of the King, in which he inferred that the King was himself partly to blame for the failure of the Ministry of the new era, by not having supported it sufficiently. In another memorandum, addressed to the Crown Prince immediately before his journey to England in December, Duncker predicted the fall of the Liberal Ministry. He also, for the first time, gave the opinion that another prospect—by no means the worst—would be the necessity of placing the reins in Herr von Bismarck's hands.

Duncker's prediction was soon realized. After the

representatives of the Lower House had passed a vote of censure upon the Government on the Budget, the Liberal Government resigned at once. Duncker hereupon suggested that the Crown Prince should advise the King to accept this resignation, and to authorize Herr von Bismarck to form a new Ministry. The Crown, in reply to the vote of censure, ordered a dissolution, and a new Ministry was formed. Once more both parties handed in their programmes. As was to be foreseen, the King regarded that of the Liberals as impossible, for it contained, besides the security of a free ballot, only the authorization for the carrying through of the laws of organization in the Upper House, economy in the Military Budget, and a reduction of the increased taxes, and he feared it might lead to Republican institutions in Prussia, and that there would be nothing left for him to do but to abdicate.

In his reports during this crisis, Duncker warned both the Crown Prince and Crown Princess of the danger inherent in prolonging the then prevailing *modus vivendi* by trying to govern now with the Liberals and now with the Conservatives. His plan was to replace the Ministers of the new era by business men of little party spirit, who would know how to govern as 'Liberals on a Conservative basis,' the one stipulation being that they should be as honourable men as their predecessors. But everything would depend on their actions. He concluded by saying, 'If Count Bernstorff is not in a position to lead such a powerful policy, Herr von Bismarck should be employed to strengthen the Ministry.'

On March 15, 1862, the investiture of the Crown



Prince with the Spanish Order of the Golden Fleece took place, with the customary ceremony, in the Royal Castle at Berlin. At the request of Queen Victoria, King William had decided to send the Crown Prince to the approaching Great Exhibition in London. The greater the interruptions which had occurred to this magnificent undertaking, owing to the death of Prince Albert, the more important, according to the views of the English Commission, became the presence of the Prussian Prince, who was also the nearest relative of the English Royal Family, amongst the royal visitors at the opening ceremony. By the presence of Prince Frederick William, a powerful representative was secured for the exhibits of German art and industry there. The reception accorded to him at the opening of the Exhibition was a very striking one, as he occupied the first place amongst all the royal personages present at the ceremony, and had already previously displayed great interest and energy as President of the Exhibition Commission appointed to prepare Prussia's share in the second Great Exhibition in London.

A second son, Henry, was born to the Crown Prince on August 14, and a week later Queen Augusta wrote to her son, from Baden, as follows :

‘MY DEAR FRITZ,

‘Your first letter touched me deeply, because of your loving heart, and on account of all the details it contained concerning our beloved Vicky. . . . I certainly expected that your son would be called Albert, because that name, no matter whether more or less German, really should be transmitted as a legacy



from the never-to-be-forgotten grandfather—and I believe that Queen Victoria expected it too.’

The new Cabinet was formed entirely of Conservatives, whose names formed a striking contrast to those who had retired. The nomination of this Cabinet placed the Crown Prince in a serious difficulty, for he had without disguise given both his confidence and his support to the late Ministry; and it would have been contrary both to the principles of the monarchy as well as to the interests of the Royal Family to manifest even the appearance of a difference before the eyes of the world. Duncker’s advice to the Crown Prince under these trying conditions may be summarized as follows:

After advising him to absent himself for a time, he then recommended him to become acquainted with the aims of the Government, and to acquire not only a clear knowledge of the subjects under discussion, but also of the Ministers and their methods, and finally of the methods they might employ to induce the King to assent to their measures. The Crown Prince should be present at the Ministerial sittings, on the condition that this should only be on the occasion of the discussion of important subjects, and he should never himself take part in them, except in such cases when it seemed right to him to oppose resolutions which might prove detrimental to the State. In such cases he should read a written declaration, and demand that it should be added to the minutes.

Duncker further maintained that the Crown Prince knew the limits which bound the will of the ruler too well to regard the constitutional form of government

as a compulsory concession to the spirit of the time; and that he would rather recognise it as the necessary expression of the changed moral and material basis and strength of the Prussian State life, and as the condition whereby that strength might be turned to the best account for the common weal.

Duncker's programme was, therefore, the recommendation of a wise reserve, which yielded nothing and yet missed nothing. The Crown Prince at that time gladly accepted Duncker's political advice, as the fact shows that the Crown Prince energetically opposed the attempt of the Ministers to remove his adviser by a call to the Bonn University, because he did not meet with their approval. He emphatically declared that he did not wish to lose his counsellor. The Ministers gained nothing by this move beyond a trenchant certificate regarding the learned doings of the proposed candidate being laid before the King, while the Crown Prince gave a proof of his attachment to the man whom they did not regard as their friend.

On September 17, 1862, the Chamber declined to vote the millions demanded for the completion of the military reforms; and as the King firmly adhered to the execution of the reform in its entirety a conflict ensued. A change of the Ministry became necessary a second time, and Prince Hohenlohe, amongst others, retired. Two days afterwards Bismarck arrived in Berlin, having been summoned to undertake the adjustment of the Government in this difficult crisis.

The next day (September 20) the Crown Prince sent for Bismarck, and in reply to the questions regarding his intentions, Bismarck said he would

first have to learn the King's wishes. The opportunity for this did not arrive until September 22, at Babelsberg.

The Crown Prince was at Reinhardsbrunn when Duncker announced Bismarck's appointment to him in a report which dealt with every detail of the event in question and clearly defined the situation. The Heir to the Throne had this time abandoned the attempt to influence the decisions of his royal father sooner than Duncker had desired. The King's threats that he would rather abdicate than give in disarmed him, and, besides, there were other advisers, representing the view that under such circumstances the Prince might be tempted to indefensible compromises, and that by his presence and interference he himself might be compromised. This opinion was backed up by the Crown Princess's secretary, the younger Stockmar, and also by Herr Samwer.\* The opinion of these men was that, as events had become so sharply defined, everything depended upon the Crown Prince maintaining his position unimpaired and a name untouched by party strife. The more remote he kept himself during that time from the course of events, the better it would be.

The Crown Prince paid attention to these representations. Whilst thanking Duncker heartily, he expressed the opinion that the next few weeks or months would bring nothing of special importance after this last evil turn of events, and offered Duncker a long leave of absence, as he, too, was on the point of

\* Karl Friedrich Lucian Samwer, member of the State Ministry of Gotha from 1863 to 1866, and Councillor to Duke Frederick of Augustenburg.

setting out for a long journey to Italy, as the guest of the Prince of Wales.

On October 15 the Crown Prince and Princess started on their travels in Italy. On the 22nd they quitted Marseilles on the English yacht *Osborne*, in company with the Prince of Wales, and landed at Hyères the same afternoon before travelling on to Palermo. There they were met by the Prussian Consul, who accompanied them on a drive in the afternoon, through the principal streets, to the Royal Palace and the Marine Promenade. On the 25th they proceeded to the coast of Africa, the English frigate *Doris* now escorting the *Osborne*. After Divine service on the 25th they landed at the Goletta Fort in the Gulf of Tunis, and visited the ruins of Carthage. At Tunis the bazaar was inspected, and a visit was then paid to the Bey, at his Castle Al-Bardo. Owing to the breaking of the axle of the left paddle-wheel on the *Osborne*, she had to be towed to Malta by the *Doris*, where she arrived after a rough voyage of fifty-six hours.

Naples was reached on November 5, and immediately after their arrival the Crown Princess drove along the Strada Nuova to sketch the lovely bay. The invitation from the King to the Palace of Capodimonte was declined, as the royal party were to remain on board the *Osborne*, so that they could take long walks and excursions into the town and neighbourhood incognito.

An excursion up Mount Vesuvius was undertaken the next day. As the great crater remained inactive, the small fumaroles were all the more active; the air was as transparent as crystal, and the view beautiful beyond description.

On November 10 the journey was continued to Rome, where a lengthy stay was made. After a brief visit to Florence the royal couple returned to Berlin on December 19, touching at Genoa, Verona, Venice, Trieste and Vienna *en route*.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE CROWN PRINCE AS CONSTITUTIONALIST

1863

HITHERTO the life of the Crown Prince had been of a comparatively idyllic nature ; but Herr von Bismarck's energetic policy necessarily affected his position, and soon resulted in his adopting a new attitude. It was from the first one of strong disapproval towards the policy of the Government, which, strange to say, was destined in the course of events to gain for him undying military fame. The Crown Prince decided to withdraw for a short time from political life, and, as already stated, set out, on October 15, 1862, with the Crown Princess, for a tour in Italy.

About this time the Lower Chamber unanimously revolted against Bismarck's contention that, if the House voted a Budget which the Upper House and the Crown were obliged to reject, the King was entitled to authorize the expenditure in question in order to carry on the Government, the Constitution containing no provision for such a case. Thus, the session of the Landtag closed on October 13 with an accentuated difference of opinion, but in the general confusion there still appeared, for the first time for many years,

a fixity of purpose which did not escape the notice of the Crown Prince.

'I trust,'—so he wrote to Bismarck on October 21—'that, to use your own words, success may attend your efforts in the present difficult phase of the constitutional life of our country, and bring to pass that which you yourself describe as the urgent and essential understanding with the representatives of the nation. I am following the course of affairs with the greatest interest.'

The Crown Prince also condemned Bismarck's first undertaking in the field of foreign policy, which consisted of a Convention with Russia for co-operation in the suppression of the Polish insurrection. He lamented what in his eyes was an unnecessarily accentuated tone of friendliness towards Russia on the part of Herr von Bismarck, and also the isolation of Prussia resulting therefrom. Still, he abstained from any active opposition, well knowing how strongly the King resented any disapprobation of his policy.\*

In the meantime, the conflict between the Second Chamber on the one side and the Crown and the Upper Chamber on the other was gradually becoming more acute.

On May 12 the Ministry laid a note before the Lower Chamber, declaring that the Ministers could not appear in the House as long as its members persisted in claiming the right of checking free speech on the part of the Ministers, and demanding a formal declaration by the Chamber that it possessed no

\* 'Memoirs of Duke Ernest II. of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha': 'Aus meinen Leben,' vol. iii., p. 281.



disciplinary powers over them. The House thereupon passed a resolution proposed by the Committee for the Conduct of Affairs, which asserted the right of the President of the Chamber to interrupt any speaker, even a Minister; that the Ministers could not make arbitrary conditions for their appearance in the Chamber; and, finally, that the Chamber was unable to furnish the required declaration. On May 27 the President read the King's reply to the remonstrance addressed to him by the Second Chamber. This document, which did not bear the counter-signature of a Minister, set forth the fact that Ministers had been interrupted; that the House, in so doing, claimed a privilege which it did not possess; and that the Ministers were not subject to the disciplinary powers of the Chamber. 'The Ministers,' continued the message, 'enjoy my confidence, and their actions have my sanction. I thank them for opposing the unconstitutional aggression of the Chamber.' A royal edict prorogued the session the same day, and the House dispersed after an expression of confidence on the part of the President that the country would stand by the Constitution and the national representatives against all arbitrary measures.

During this critical period the position of the Crown Prince was far from being an easy one; for whereas the King was determined that the rights of the Crown, in which he saw the main elements of the strength of Prussia, should not be sacrificed to the claims of the Lower House, the Crown Prince leant strongly towards the English system of Parliamentary government, and saw in his father's action a serious danger to the stability of the throne. That such were his views was

well known, and he was besieged with letters and memorials from all sides. He was simultaneously courted by the Progressives, and implored by the Conservatives to save the throne by joining hands with the Government.

Thus placed between duty and conviction, he at first endeavoured to act in accordance with the spirit of the words he had addressed to Max Duncker :

‘I am silent, and live in a state of passive neutrality. I shall neither achieve nor prevent anything, as everything is the direct outcome of circumstances which have been deliberately created and brought to pass.’

But a few days later, on May 31, on the point of starting on a journey of military inspection in East Prussia, probably carried away by the fear that the King might proceed to arbitrary measures, he addressed a letter to his father, which contained the following remarkable passage :

‘The expressions you lately made use of in my presence regarding the possibility of having to force your measures upon the country compel me to speak plainly on the subject. On dismissing the Auerswald Cabinet, you told me that, being more Liberal than yourself, I now had an opportunity of playing the usual part of a Crown Prince, by throwing difficulties in the way of your Government. I promised you at that time to keep in the background, to remain silent, and to offer no opposition. But, though I still intend to keep my promise, I feel it my duty to address you privately. I beseech you, my dearest father, not to infringe the law in the way you hinted. No one is more fully aware than I that to you an oath is sacred, and not to be trifled with. But the position of a

Sovereign in regard to his Ministers is sometimes a very difficult one. Skilled as they are in the art of advocacy, and expert in interpretation, they are able to represent a measure as fair and necessary, and, by degrees, to force a Sovereign into a very different path to the one he intended to tread.'

In reply, the King wrote as follows :

'You say you do not intend to offer any opposition. Then you cannot have used sufficient care, for opposition speeches of yours have got abroad and found their way to me. You have now an occasion for making amends by expressing yourself in a different way, by keeping aloof from the Progressives, and by turning towards the Conservatives. The decree of June 1,\* besides being in accordance with the Constitution, and more particularly with Clause 63, will be laid before the Landtag. The decree, so far from being the enormity you think, should have been introduced in the shape of a Bill, even by the last Liberal Cabinet ; for it was on this condition only that I sanctioned the

\* On June 1, 1863, shortly after the close of a barren session, the *Staatsanzeiger* published a press ordinance, by which the authorities were empowered to suppress the publication of any local newspaper or periodical, either for a time or permanently, *for persisting in an attitude endangering the commonweal*. The public safety was to be considered as endangered, not only by the contents of single articles giving rise to penal proceedings, but also by the general tendency of the newspapers in question to pursue any of the following directions :

Undermining respect and loyalty towards the King ; endangering the public peace by stirring up subjects against each other ; exposing to hatred or contempt State institutions, public authorities and their measures by the suppression or distortion of facts or by means of abuse and derision ; inciting to disobedience of the law or the orders of the authorities ; undermining religious and moral law ; ridiculing the doctrines, institutions or ritual of any of the Christian Churches or recognised religious bodies.

law protecting printing-offices against the supervision and interference of the police.'

On June 3 the Crown Prince wrote a strong letter to the Minister President, in which he remarked :

'I deem the proceedings of the Cabinet to be both illegal and injurious to the State and the dynasty. I declare the measure to have been taken against my wishes and without my knowledge, and I protest against any inferences or assumptions which may be founded on my relations with the Council of State.'

By the King's express commands the formal communication to the Ministry of the Crown Prince's protest, as demanded by this letter, did not take place. However, Bismarck considered it necessary to acquaint his colleagues privately with the important action taken by the Prince.

Again, on June 4, the Prince wrote to the King, stating in vigorous language that the Constitution had been evaded and set aside in the case of the press ordinance; that he knew what he was about, and was well aware of the pain he caused His Majesty.

Even among Bismarck's admirers, the press ordinance caused great dismay. Privy Councillor Abeken was strongly against it, while Theodor von Bernhardt went so far as to propose to impeach the Ministry.

Among the men who pressed the Crown Prince, during his presence in Dantzic, to defend the Constitution, Burgomaster von Winter\* was one of the most urgent. At the reception, on May 5, of the magistrates and other functionaries of the city at the Town Hall, Winter, in welcoming the royal

\* Von Winter had formerly been Chief of the Police at Berlin.

guests, declared that the authorities and citizens regretted that circumstances made it impossible for them to give free vent to their delight at the royal visit.

The Crown Prince replied as follows :

‘ I thank you for the sentiments you have expressed, and I am glad to meet an old acquaintance whose energies formerly so well proved are sure to bear fruit also here. I regret with you that my visit has chanced upon a time of conflict between the Government and the people, the news of which I received with the greatest surprise. I knew nothing of the decrees which have caused it. I was absent at the time, and took no part in the deliberations which led to these ordinances.

‘ But we all, and I myself most of all, since I know best the noble and paternal aims and lofty sentiments of His Majesty the King—we all have confidence that, under the rule of His Majesty, the kingdom of Prussia is advancing steadily towards that greatness which Providence has destined for our nation.’

This speech was drafted by the Crown Prince himself.

The first news of the Crown Prince’s speech in Dantzic reached Duncker through the newspapers, and it was only after several days that he received a full account of the matter from the Crown Prince himself, in a letter written at intervals during the journey. Duncker was extremely anxious to prevent the Crown Prince being led by the applause of the Opposition to express himself again in a similar fashion in public. In order to counteract the influence of the Progressive party, Duncker availed himself of the

circumstance that the Crown Prince was about to pay a visit to a friend of his, Herr von Saucken-Julienfelde. In a letter to Saucken, Duncker could oppose the Progressive views and demands, to which Saucken himself was inclined, far more warmly and freely than in a direct communication to the Prince himself. He held it to be his duty to repel the exaggerated notions of the more extreme Liberals, who already began to prophesy for the dynasty the fate of the Stuarts and Bourbons. 'I consider it unwarrantable,' he writes to Saucken, 'to disturb the Crown Prince with such comparisons, and to incite him to action for the rescue of the dynasty, which up to now, at any rate, is not in danger. Such proceedings are hardly less justifiable than the insinuations of the Conservatives, who compare the Prince's position since Dantzic with that of the Duke of Orleans towards Charles X.' After showing that, even without the Prince's speech, there had never been any signs of sympathy on his part with the Ministerial system, he concluded: 'Endeavour, therefore, to prevent any further action of the nature of the speech at Dantzic from being urged upon the Crown Prince. Such would only tend to widen the breach with the King, estrange the Prince from the army, and be of service to the other side; for it would encourage the Radicals, and thus perhaps render the conflict throughout the country more acute, whilst endangering the throne more seriously than is the case at present.'

At this period, however, there was no longer any danger that the Crown Prince would proceed farther in this direction.

According to his own account to Duncker, he had



received a very grave letter from the King on June 7, in answer to his own of June 4, and with it a criticism of the Dantzic speech, which had been telegraphed to Berlin. The letter contained, besides a severe reproof, grave injunctions concerning the future conduct of the Prince.

According to the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* of July 9, this letter called upon the Crown Prince to amend the speech, in case the press had reported it inaccurately, or to withdraw his words, if they had been published correctly; to treat with coolness such Progressives as presented themselves; and to enter upon closer relations with the Conservatives. In the event of further utterances of a similar character, the result would be his immediate recall to Berlin, and even the deprivation of all military command. The letter was far milder than had been expected by the King's immediate circle. At first proposals of greater severity had been made, especially by several officers of high rank, in which Herr von Bismarck concurred; and the King also seemed inclined to take this view. But on the following day Bismarck recognised the clumsy, impolitic nature of these suggestions; and he therefore opposed them with signal success.

This letter of the King was answered by the Crown Prince in the following words:

‘The address I delivered at Dantzic was the result of calm reflection. I have long owed it to my conscience and my position to profess, before the whole world, a view, the truth of which has forced itself upon me more fully from day to day. Only the hope of being able after all to avoid placing myself in opposition to you stifled the monitions of my con-



science. But now, ignoring my dissentient views, the Ministry have taken a step imperilling my future and that of my children, I shall make as courageous a stand for my future as you, dear father, are making for your own. I cannot retract anything I have said. All I can do is to keep silence. Should you wish me to do so, I hereby place my commission in the army and my seat in the Council of State at your disposal. I beg you to appoint me a place of residence, or to permit me to select one myself, either in Prussia or abroad. If I am not allowed to speak my mind, I must naturally wish to dis sever myself entirely from the sphere of politics.'

At the same time the Prince entreated the King to forgive the vexation he caused him.

The royal answer to this letter, on June 11, passed over in silence the complaint against the Ministry as well as the request for dismissal. 'With parental love, but with kingly solemnity,' His Majesty declared himself willing to forgive the past; after a severe reproof of the Crown Prince's action in making public opposition and setting up a banner, which might have caused the nation to have to choose between father and son, he accepted the promise of the Prince to abstain from further utterance, and expressly bound him over to silence.

That this incident closed in an amicable fashion seems to have been chiefly due to the exertions of Bismarck. In his 'Thoughts and Recollections' he says (vol. i., p. 318):

'Although I was obliged to admit that the King's irritation was justified, I endeavoured to prevent its being followed by any State measures. In the interest

of the dynasty, I set myself the task of appeasing the King and restraining him from steps which would have recalled memories of Frederick William I. and Küstrin. This was achieved on June 10, during a drive from Babelsberg to the New Palace, where His Majesty inspected the Instructional Battalion; the conversation was carried on in French on account of the footmen on the box. I was enabled to pacify the paternal indignation by means of the State reason that in the approaching conflict between the throne and Parliament any discord in the royal house must be avoided and ignored, and that the King and father must take especial care that the interests of both were not injured. "Deal gently with the young man Absalom," I observed, alluding to the fact that the clergy were already preaching on 2 Samuel xv. 3 and 4; "your Majesty would do well to avoid any decision *ab irato*; State reasons alone must be considered." He appeared particularly impressed by my reminding him that in the conflict between Frederick William I. and his son the sympathies both of contemporaries and posterity were with the latter, and that it was not advisable to make a martyr of the Crown Prince.'

The paternal mildness of the King's letter, which showed an evident intention of letting bygones be bygones, had the effect of disarming the Crown Prince. However, he still cherished resentment and anger against 'the insolent Ministers, whom he had no wish to see.' His princely pride revolted against the Premier (Bismarck), who had at last replied to his protest of June 3 in an autograph letter dated June 10, in which Bismarck mentioned that he had been forbidden by His Majesty to bring the said protest to

the knowledge of the Ministry. He remarked that it was true that the Crown Prince could either aid or impede the difficult task of the Ministry; yet the Ministers were the faithful servants of the King, and could only continue to act as they had done. Bismarck reiterated that the press ordinance of June 1 could not be considered as an infringement of the Prussian Constitution.

Three weeks later the Crown Prince sent Bismarck the following rejoinder :

‘STETTIN,

‘*June 30, 1863.*

‘I see, from your letter of the 10th instant, that at His Majesty’s command you have omitted to communicate officially to the Ministry of State my protest respecting the ordinance restricting the liberty of the press, which I sent to you from Graudenz on June 3. I can easily understand that the opportunity of treating as a personal matter an incident which, as you yourself have acknowledged, might in its consequences acquire widespread significance, was not unwelcome to you. It would serve no purpose for me to insist on that communication being made, as I am justified in inferring from your own words that it will have been done unofficially.

‘It is necessary for me, however, to speak plainly to you respecting the alternative which you place before me: namely, to lighten or to render more difficult the task which the Ministry has undertaken. I cannot lighten that task, as I find myself opposed to it in principle. A loyal administration of the laws and of the Constitution, respect and goodwill towards an

easily led, intelligent and capable people—these are the principles which, in my opinion, should guide every Government in the treatment of the country. I cannot consider the policy which finds expression in the ordinance of June 1 as being in harmony with these principles. It is true you seek to prove to me the constitutional character of that ordinance, and you assure me that you and your colleagues are mindful of your oath. I think, however, that the Government requires a stronger basis than very dubious interpretations, which do not appeal to the sound common-sense of the people. You yourself call attention to the circumstance that even your opponents respect the honesty of your convictions. I will not inquire into that assertion, but if you attach any importance to the opinions of your opponents, the circumstance that the great majority of the educated classes among our people deny the constitutional character of the ordinance must necessarily awaken scruples in your mind. . . .

‘And what is the success which you anticipate from this policy? The tranquillizing of the public mind and the restoration of peace? Do you believe that you can appease public sentiment by once more offending its sense of justice? It seems to me contrary to human nature to expect a change, when the existing feeling is constantly confirmed and aggravated by the action of the Government. I will tell you what results I anticipate from your policy. You will go on quibbling with the Constitution until it loses all value in the eyes of the people. In that way, you will on the one hand arouse anarchical movements that go beyond the bounds of the Constitution; while on the other hand,

whether you intend it or not, you will pass from one venturesome interpretation to another, until you are finally driven into an open breach of the Constitution. I regard those who lead His Majesty the King, my most gracious father, into such courses as the most dangerous advisers for Crown and country.

‘P.S.—Even before June 1 of this year I rarely made use of my right to attend the sittings of the Ministry of State. From the foregoing statement of my convictions you will understand my request that His Majesty the King should allow me to abstain altogether from attending them at present. A continuous public and personal manifestation of the differences between myself and the Ministry would be neither in keeping with my position nor my inclination. In every other respect, however, I shall impose no restriction upon the expression of my views; and the Ministry may rest assured that it will depend upon themselves and their own future actions whether, in spite of my own strong reluctance, I find myself forced into further public steps, when duty appears to call for them.’\*

In reference to this letter, Prince Bismarck remarks in his ‘Thoughts and Recollections’ (vol. i., p. 319):

‘The fact that I persisted in the path I had entered upon, after receiving this declaration from the Heir Apparent, was in itself strong evidence that I cared little about remaining in office after the succession of the new Sovereign, which might have taken place very soon. At the same time, the Crown Prince obliged me to tell him this in the plainest language, in a conversation to be mentioned later.’

\* Moritz Busch, ‘Bismarck: Some Secret Pages of his History,’ vol. iii., pp. 235-237.

The relations between the Crown Prince and Duncker seemed to be unaffected by what had occurred. The correspondence between them continued with unabated vigour, and it was arranged that Duncker should shortly visit the Prince at Putbus, where he was then residing. During this period, owing to some unexplained indiscretion, the correspondence between the King and Crown Prince was published in the *Times*. Duncker sent the article which appeared on this subject to the Prince, at the same time expressing his deep regret that the Prussian Royal Family should be presented in such a light to the English public. The following day he addressed a strong letter to the Crown Prince, representing 'that only a system well weighed and consistently adhered to, free from improvised resolutions,' was worthy of his high position, and could alone avert disastrous consequences. The Prince had to decide between two systems, between 'what I might call the English system,' and which was supported by the Progressive party, and the opposite course, which he himself had recommended both in March and September of the previous year. The former system demanded that the Prince should hold himself aloof, and by means of long journeys abstain from even the representative appearances required by the Constitution, and that by the assertion of his differences with the then unpopular Government, by the help of the home and foreign press, he should assume such a position as to inspire the Opposition with hope, and thus rescue the nominally imperilled dynasty. The contrary system, recommended by Duncker, urged the Prince not to go beyond those

forms of opposition which his father himself had once made use of, not to assert his convictions elsewhere than in the Cabinet, where he had a right to do so, and to seek popularity in no other path than that of faithful and laborious fulfilment of duty. Duncker explained how the episode at Dantzic, though not in accordance with this system, would be construed as a single act of protest against the exclusion of the Prince from the deliberations of the Cabinet upon the press ordinance. He demonstrated the logical possibility of a change of plan, and expressed the hope that the King would not refuse to recall the disrespectful Ministers to a sense of their duty towards the Heir Apparent. But a choice between the two systems was absolutely indispensable.

Duncker next made an effort to counteract the exertions of the Progressive party to win the Crown Prince over to themselves and to the 'English system,' and he also endeavoured to expose their secret machinations. An allusion to the Crown Prince's conviction of the necessity for reorganizing the army sufficed to point out the breach that separated him from the Progressives. It was not difficult for Duncker to show that, when the Prince was called upon to rule, he would not be in a position to do so according to Progressive ideas, and that it was therefore not advisable to awaken hopes in that direction.

To these warnings on Duncker's part, the Crown Prince replied on July 14, from Putbus, in the following words :

'It almost seems to me as though you, my dear Duncker, think that I have made a secret compact with the Progressive party, and that the publication



in the press of my correspondence with His Majesty is the result of such a connection.

‘I also gather from your letters that you have the feeling that your personal and official advice no longer carries weight with me.

‘I beg you to be completely reassured on both points. What I wrote to you lately still holds good, and you have already been invited by my telegram to visit me here on Saturday.

‘There has never been any question of publication, and it would amuse me to learn how the Progressives intend to print a correspondence which they do not possess, since both originals and copies are in my own hands. If occult arts have been at work, then indeed my powers are of no avail, and I should not be surprised if, by means of a system of personal espionage not unusual in certain circles, they had contrived to possess themselves of copies through Bismarck! We shall know this some day.

‘If the Progressive party insist on staking all in order to count me among their numbers, I can as little prevent it as I could hinder the fact that Bismarck zealously endeavoured to enrol me among his followers.

‘My views are shown by the speech at Dantzic; I will neither say nor do anything more, nor will I lead the Opposition.

‘If Waldeck and his friends are Progressives, I have nothing in common with them. But if by that name one understands the Liberals, with whom, unfortunately, the Old Liberals are no longer in unison, I have no reason to regard them as enemies.’

The speech of the Crown Prince at Dantzic was not without painful consequences for his reporting

Councillor. Duncker was summoned on June 9 to the Minister-President, but declined to give any reply when questioned as to the 'intentions of the Crown Prince.' A second interview with Bismarck took place on June 23, with regard to the article in the *Times*. Duncker now learned that his refusal of any elucidation had met with the King's disapproval. Bismarck informed him that, in consequence of this, his position with the Crown Prince was endangered; that he (Bismarck) had supported him, and would endeavour to do so if the matter should again be called in question, since, although he knew him of old to belong to the Opposition, he also knew him to be a true Prussian; but that possibly another Councillor with Ministerial views might be associated with him. Duncker replied that he regarded it as his duty to resign whenever there was any possibility of his position forming the subject of a serious disagreement between the King and the Crown Prince. Duncker was summoned yet a third time to Bismarck on July 17, and this time examined on oath as to his knowledge of, or participation in, the publication of the above-mentioned correspondence. His declaration was to the effect that no one had been directly or indirectly placed by him in a position to make use of the contents of the letters, and that he was absolutely ignorant of the manner in which the disclosure had taken place.

Thereupon Duncker betook himself to Putbus, in accordance with the Crown Prince's invitation, determined, not, indeed, to demand his dismissal, but to express his views freely. At Putbus he met Herr Samwer. The two old friends here confronted each

other as the representatives of opposing systems, and Duncker hinted that he was not blind to the nets and pitfalls that were so industriously being spread in his path. Duncker's account of his interview with Bismarck on July 17 made a strong impression on the Crown Prince. It was now evident that His Royal Highness was no longer so determined in his attitude of opposition. A rupture was prevented, and the Prince's adviser returned to Berlin greatly encouraged to persevere in his course of counselling moderation.

## CHAPTER VII

### OTHER EVENTS OF THE YEAR

1863

IN order to understand the attitude of the Crown Prince towards the Government, the profound distrust inspired by Bismarck's accession to power must be borne in mind.

No one had the least idea of the real objects of the new Minister in framing a policy so greatly at variance with that of his predecessors, and consequently the wildest schemes were attributed to him. He was generally regarded as a man who would not be adverse to ceding the left bank of the Rhine to France, in exchange for the annexation of Hanover and Mecklenburg. It was also known that Bismarck desired an alliance with Napoleon III., and that he wished to magnify Austria's intrigues at the Diet into a *casus belli*.

As early as September 24, 1862, Max von Forckenbeck\* wrote:

\* A distinguished Prussian politician; at one time President of the Prussian Lower Chamber, and subsequently of the Reichstag. He was also successively Chief Burgomaster of Breslau and Berlin. Forckenbeck was a Liberal, and one of the few men who was simultaneously in the good graces of Bismarck, King William and the Crown Prince.

‘Bismarck-Schönhausen represents government without a Budget, martial law at home and war abroad. I regard him as most dangerous to the freedom and prosperity of Prussia.’

On October 2 he writes :

‘I believe we shall soon be rid of him.’

At the end of January, 1863, the opinion was generally and openly expressed that Prussia was rapidly approaching a *coup d'état*, and many were the apprehensions that the Crown would be defeated in the conflict with the national representatives. The Crown Prince himself shared this apprehensive view.

The resistance and disapproval which Bismarck's policy then encountered from public opinion was based, as the events of later years have shown, on a misunderstanding of a nature which could not be cleared up at the time. Long afterwards Bismarck himself once did his adversaries of the conflict period the justice to admit that their former opposition was fully justified from their point of view. On April 5, 1876, he said, in the Lower Chamber :

‘I think my mind is sufficiently impartial to enable me fully to comprehend the train of ideas followed by the Lower Chamber at the time of the conflict about the Constitution. *I have every respect for the determination with which the representatives of the Prussian people at that time stood up for what they considered right.* I cannot reproach anyone. They could not know, and I could not tell them, the real aim of my policy ; and if I had been able to tell it them, they would still have had a right to reply, “We are more concerned for the rights of the Constitution of the country than for its foreign policy.”’

One would be fully justified in applying this declaration also to the attitude of the Crown Prince at that time. In his 'Reflections and Reminiscences' (vol. i., p. 322 *et seq.*) Prince Bismarck acquaints us with the further development of his relations with the Crown Prince after the Dantzic episode.

In August, 1863, the Crown Prince paid a friendly visit to Bismarck at Gastein, in the course of which he sought to explain his previous attitude towards the Government as being the result of his aloofness from affairs. He spoke unreservedly as a man who sees his error, and seeks to excuse it by the influences which controlled his actions. However, already, in September, after the Crown Prince, the King and Bismarck had returned from Gastein to Berlin, the influences which had inspired the Prince to action in June now once more gained the upper hand. The day after the dissolution of the Lower Chamber had been decided on, the Crown Prince wrote to Bismarck as follows:

'BERLIN,

'September 3, 1863.

'I informed His Majesty to-day of the views which I expressed to you in my letter from Putbus, and which I begged you not to submit to the King before I myself had done so. An important resolution was taken yesterday at the Council. I did not wish to remonstrate with His Majesty in the presence of the Ministers ; to-day I have done so ; I stated my opinions and expressed my grave apprehension for the future. The King is now aware that I am a decided opponent of the Ministry.

'FREDERICK WILLIAM.'

The request preferred in the Crown Prince's letter of June 30, for permission to discontinue his attendance at the meetings of the Cabinet, now formed the subject of discussion.

The King decided that the Crown Prince should continue to be present at the meetings of the Cabinet, as he had been since 1861, and commissioned Bismarck to inform him of the fact.

'I fancy,' Bismarck relates, 'that the audience requested for this purpose never took place; for I recollect that the discussion was brought about by the arrival of the Crown Prince by mistake for a meeting, which did not take place on the day in question. I asked him why he held himself so much aloof from the Government; in a few years, after all, it would be his own; if he had other principles, he should rather seek to bring about a transition of ideas than raise opposition. He rejected this suggestion brusquely, apparently under the impression that I was endeavouring to pave the way for being taken into his service. I have never forgotten the hostile expression of Olympian haughtiness which accompanied the words, and I still seem to see the Prince's head thrown back, his heightened colour, and the look he cast at me over his left shoulder. I suppressed my own indignation, thought of "Carlos and Alba" (Act II., scene 5), and replied that I had spoken in an outburst of dynastic feeling, with the intention of bringing him into closer relations with his father, in the interests of the country and the dynasty, both of which were impaired by the estrangement; and that I had done all that I could in June to restrain his august father from resolutions *ab irato*, because I desired the maintenance of harmony



in the Royal Family, in the interests of the nation, during the struggle against Parliamentary dominion. I said that I was a faithful servant to his august father, and wished that he, when he came to ascend the throne, might find servants as faithful as I had been. I hoped that he would put away the idea that I was possibly aiming at some day being his Minister; for that I should never be. He was mollified in a moment, as suddenly as he had fired up, and closed the conversation with a few friendly words.'

The Crown Prince still adhered to his wish of not being present at the future meetings of the Cabinet, and forwarded a memorial to the King in September, setting forth his reasons in a manner that served at the same time to defend his action in June. A private correspondence ensued between the King and Bismarck, which was closed by the following note from the King:

'BABELSBERG,

'November 7, 1863.

'I herewith send you my answer to my son the Crown Prince, in reference to his memorial of September. For the sake of clearness I enclose the document, and your own remarks, which I made use of in my answer.'

Bismarck did not take a copy of this memorandum, but its contents are easily seen from his comments, which are printed in his 'Reflections and Reminiscences.' These comments were certainly justified in many ways, and from a political point of view the Minister-President had a better right on his side than the Crown Prince. But the moral right of opposing

a system which he not only considered faulty, but even tending towards the ruin of the State, cannot be denied to the Prince; and in his opposition he by no means went so far as his father had done at the time of the Manteuffel Ministry.

The bitterness with which the Prussian nation resented the new policy of the Bismarck régime was clearly demonstrated on the fiftieth anniversary of the proclamation *An mein Volk*, on March 17, 1863, when the foundation-stone of the memorial to Frederick William III. was laid in Berlin. The Crown Prince, who had just been appointed Inspector of the 1st Army Inspection for the period of one year, commanded the military parade, and accompanied his father to the festivities in honour of the survivors of the War of Liberation and the Knights of the Iron Cross.\* The citizens of Berlin held aloof from the festivities, which were only attended by members of the *Kreuz-zeitung* party. The popular feeling was well expressed by an article in the Liberal *Grenzboten* by Gustav Freytag, who thus refers to the celebration:

‘All good Prussians will pass this day quietly and seriously, and will consider the means by which they may best preserve the illustrious house of Hohenzollern for the future welfare of the State.’

A few days later the Crown Prince and Princess paid a visit to the Altmark, the ancestral dominion of the Prussian monarchy, and returned to Potsdam on May 29 for a few days’ rest before commencing a tour of military inspections in the provinces of Prussia, Pomerania and Posen, where the troops composing the

\* A decoration created and first bestowed during the War of Liberation, 1813.

1st Army Inspection were quartered. The Crown Princess performed the ceremony of christening a newly-built corvette, the *Vineta*, at the royal wharf of Dantzic on June 4. After visiting Königsberg, Pillau, Memel, Tilsit and Trakehnen, the Crown Prince proceeded alone through Lithuania and Masuren to Posen, which he visited for the first time on June 21.

At the reception at Government House, neither the Archbishop of Gnesen and Posen, Monseigneur von Przyluski, nor his Suffragan, nor the greater number of the Chapter, were present to welcome the Heir Apparent.

The Archbishop, who had reached the advanced age of seventy-four, excused his non-appearance on the ground of a liver complaint ; the Suffragan, Stefanowicz, alleged ecclesiastical business (hearing confessions) ; while the Metropolitan Chapter pleaded that they had received no invitation to the festivity. There was a contention between this latter body and the President of the province, because he had omitted to pay ceremonial visits to the members of the Chapter, or, at least, to the Head and the Suffragan Bishop, on taking up his appointment.

This incident caused the King to desire the Ambassador to the Holy See to mention the behaviour of the Archbishop of Posen to the Cardinal-Secretary of State, Antonelli. The latter, without hesitation, strongly censured the conduct of the Archbishop. The Pope personally took the same view, with the result that a communication was sent from Rome to the Archbishop, informing him of the opinion of the Pope with regard to his conduct, as well as that of his Suffragan and the Metropolitan Chapter. Sub-

sequently the censured ecclesiastics humbly apologized for their behaviour.

The feeling created by the then existing conflict between the Crown and the Parliament had again been clearly demonstrated by the fact that the progressively inclined communal authorities of the towns visited by the Crown Prince and Princess abstained from any celebration of the royal visit. In reference to this attitude, the following remarks occur in a letter to Ludolf Parisius from Herr von Saucken-Tarputschen, who was then a member of the Progressive party, and subsequently a confidential friend of the Crown Prince :

‘I am very glad that I was not at home lately ; the Crown Prince crossed my estate whilst driving to Julienfeld. Our party has agreed to make the Prince suffer for his father’s sins, though he has publicly declared that he has no share in them. I do not quite understand the logic of this demonstration. I think it would have been far more painful, and therefore salutary for the King, if the Crown Prince had received official addresses everywhere, and been informed that the people rejoiced to hear that he had no share in the violation of the oath. Then the Prince would have been obliged to speak out, and that would have been a good thing in any case, yet best of all if the scandal had been increased by deputations being prohibited.’

In the same letter, Saucken describes the impression made by the Crown Princess in East Prussia :

‘Everyone was pleased with the Crown Princess : she possesses a mind of her own. She told President Eichmann that she reads the *Volkszeitung*, the

*Nationalzeitung*, and the *Times* every day, and that her views were in complete agreement with these newspapers. This was a great shock to him, and he did not know what to reply. . . .’

In Dantzic, the attitude of the authorities had had the effect of restraining the mass of the people from making any public manifestation of pleasure at the royal visit. But elsewhere, while the civil authorities followed the example of Dantzic, the people, on the contrary, gave full vent to their loyalty to the royal pair, so that their journey through the three provinces almost resembled a triumphal progress.

Immediately after the tour of inspection, the Crown Prince and family visited Prince and Princess zu Putbus on the island of Rügen, and stayed there for several weeks. From time to time excursions were made to Further Pomerania, and Stralsund was also visited.

The Crown Prince had been requested by the Committee of the International Statistical Congress, which was to meet in September in Berlin, to become its patron and president. The King, however, was opposed to this. Duncker persuaded the Crown Prince to address a memorandum to His Majesty, the subdued tone of which, whilst expressing his readiness to accept the honour thus offered to him, was calculated to restore him to his rightful position in public affairs, and to sink the late unfortunate events in oblivion. Besides laying stress on the scientific and moral importance of the Congress, the memorandum bore a markedly anti-Progressive character. The Progressive party were ready to regard the postponement of the Congress as a political

demonstration. With a like intention, the magistracy of Berlin had resolved to refrain from taking any part in it. Against this demonstrative attitude the memorandum declared that it was so much the more 'our' task to welcome the strangers, and that in the present state of affairs it was to the interest of Prussia to show 'that we possess self-respect and consciousness of our strength, and feel neither vexation nor anxiety.' The fact that men like Virchow and Schulze-Delitzsch were members of the Committee had nothing to do with their political views; party feeling might be ignored on the neutral ground of statistics, and it would tend to diminish the political excitement if men of conflicting political views were to work together for objects of a non-political nature.

The King, probably by the advice of the Cabinet, nevertheless persisted in declining this proposal. On August 25 Minister von Roon wrote as follows to Bismarck at Baden-Baden :

'It appears to me beyond all doubt that the King will not be able to open the Statistical Congress. I am equally convinced that the Crown Prince will not be allowed to take any active part in it. The most natural arrangement would be for the *rôle* to fall to the Minister for Home Affairs.'

And so it happened. Count Eulenburg opened the Congress on September 7 in the great Assembly Hall of the Upper House, and the members were then formally received by the King. The Crown Prince personally attended the meetings of the Congress, and also received the members in the New Palace on the occasion of their visit to Potsdam on September 12 to see the sights of the place.

In the summer of 1863 the Austrian (Schmerling) Cabinet made an attempt to anticipate Prussia in a scheme of reform for the German Federal Constitution, and to take the solution of the German question out of her hands. On July 31 the Emperor Francis Joseph invited the Sovereign Princes and free cities of Germany to a Conference, on August 16, at Frankfort-on-the-Main, to debate the reorganization of the Confederation on more modern lines. On August 2 he visited King William, then staying at Gastein with Bismarck, in order to gain his consent to the plan. The Austrian proposals culminated in the nomination of a Federal Directory of five members and a Federal Parliament, composed of delegates from the Chambers of the various States, with deliberative but not determinative powers. The moment for urging a reform of this kind was not unskilfully chosen on the part of Austria. Owing to the Russophile sympathies of Prussia in the Polish question, Austria could rely on the support of France; her internal condition, too, appeared settled in comparison with the existing Constitutional conflict in Prussia. She hoped by the Liberal character of her proposals to win over the German nation to Federal reforms, since confidence in the Prussian Government had been considerably shaken during the last few months.

King William was not averse to the Austrian proposal, but Bismarck insisted on a refusal being sent. A further suggestion in a letter from the Emperor, that the King should send the Crown Prince as his representative to the Congress of Princes, was also declined. This proposal was the reason for the King's summoning his son to Gastein. Herr R. Haym, in his



biography of Duncker, relates that the Crown Prince, while at Gastein, advised the declining of the Austrian invitation, whereas H. Friedjung, in his work, 'The Struggle for the Hegemony of Germany,' asserts that the Crown Prince regarded the decision of the King not to attend the Congress of Princes at Frankfort as a mistake. He thought that Prussia ought, by taking part in it, to have manifested her goodwill towards German unity. This contradiction may be explained by the hypothesis that the Crown Prince altered his views later on, and this theory is confirmed by a letter to Duke Ernest of Saxe-Coburg quoted below.\*

During the Congress of Princes at Frankfort, numerous relatives of Duke Ernest were assembled at Coburg. The Queen of England was spending the summer at the Rosenau; on August 19 the Crown Princess of Prussia went there to stay with her, followed by her husband on the 23rd. This family gathering was, however, overshadowed by the grave nature of the political situation. The Queen of England was seriously concerned at the isolated position of Prussia, and it needed all the persuasive powers of the Crown Prince to appease the fears as to the future felt by both Queen Victoria and the Crown Princess.

After his return from the Congress of Princes at Frankfort, Duke Ernest forwarded to the Crown Prince a memorandum, dated September 2, setting forth the reforms proposed by the Congress, and the danger incurred by Prussia in persisting in her present attitude.

The Crown Prince replied on September 6 :

\* See p. 167.

‘MY DEAR UNCLE,

‘I received your letter by the hands of Lieutenant von Schleinitz with sincere pleasure, and I heartily thank you for writing so soon. The same evening I handed your letter to the King, who wished to answer it, or at least make marginal comments. As the King has kept your letter, my answer must be confined to generalities, and you must kindly recollect that I am obliged to trust to memory.

‘The fact of the meeting of the Congress of Princes is in itself an important advance in the struggle for German unity, and Austria has gained the immense and lasting advantage of being the author of the work. Of late years Prussia has missed every favourable opportunity for this project of reform, and at last her Parliamentary conflict of now nearly two years’ duration has provided her opponent with a welcome opportunity of forestalling her as the natural champion of the solution of the German question.

‘These are historical facts. The German Princes publicly proclaimed their readiness and generous wishes for the progress of Germany. But Austria unmasked herself by finally demanding a simple vote of assent or dissent to the project of reform, which resulted in the signatures of a number of interested Federal Princes. That the latter were unwilling to regard anything as binding which did not also receive the sanction of Prussia is natural, but I consider your action, as the head of the Liberal Princes, equally comprehensible and correct in finally accepting the Austrian proposal, weighty remonstrances and counter-arguments notwithstanding, simply in order to obtain

a foundation of some kind, which is, after all, better than the baseless *status quo* of the past. But the mere idea of a joint directory appears to me to show the unstable nature of the Austrian scheme, apart from the present impossible idea of Prussia and Austria working side by side to decide the fate of Germany. They may call it alternation, co-ordination, or anything else, but Germany will never reap any benefit at the hands of the two rivals so long as both wish to exert equal influence.

‘You will not agree with me herein, but I cannot think otherwise, and yet I am of opinion that Prussia must now go halfway, and, by a close examination of the amended proposals, openly declare all her views, assents and objections in order to display her honest desire to help Germany.

‘I should consider a manifesto containing nothing but demands to be foolish, apart from what has taken place in Frankfort. A mere rejection would be equally reprehensible. I do not know what will happen, and I shall probably not hear immediately, as I am in a new dilemma. In consequence of the dissolution of the House, I have requested the King to allow me to be absent from the meetings of the Cabinet. . . .

‘And under such auspices Prussia will reply to the labours of Frankfort for Liberal reform.

‘Affectionately yours,

‘FREDERICK WILLIAM.

‘P.S.—The King has just given me his rough copy, which I have written out again for you, as it was rather hastily done. I am sending it off at once; and, in spite of the manœuvres, I will manage to answer

your kind letter, with the original beside me, more fully than was possible to-day.'

At the urgent request of Queen Victoria, the Crown Prince and his family paid a long visit to Balmoral, interrupted by a short journey back to Berlin in order to attend the opening of the Landtag by the King on November 9. Returning to England a few days later, the Crown Prince joined the family circle at Windsor Castle, and remained there until the middle of December, when visits were paid to the Courts of Brussels and Karlsruhe before the royal pair returned to the Prussian capital.

In political circles, the prolonged absence of the Crown Prince was interpreted, probably not without some foundation, as being a demonstration of his antagonism to the existing system of government, which in the meantime had suffered another check at the hands of the Progressive party. The press ordinance of June 1, on being rejected by the Lower Chamber, as had been expected, was annulled on November 21.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE WAR WITH DENMARK

1863—1864

WHILE the Crown Prince and his family were still in England, King Frederick VII. of Denmark, the last of his house, died on November 15, 1863; and thus the vexed question of the succession to the throne of the Elbe Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein was brought up.

By the Treaty of London of May 8, 1852, the possession of the Duchies was assured to Denmark on condition that the independence of these provinces and the rights of the German population were to be preserved. The treaty also stipulated that Schleswig was not to be separated from Holstein, which belonged to the German Confederation. But in order to insure the integrity of the Danish kingdom, Duke Christian of Sonderburg-Augustenburg accepted an indemnity of 2,500,000 thalers, and resigned his hereditary claim to the Duchies. The two sons of the Duke, however, did not acquiesce in this arrangement; on the contrary, the Hereditary Prince Frederick\*

\* The Pretender to the succession of the Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein is alternately spoken of as Hereditary Prince and as

asserted his rights of succession by a subsequent declaration. The German Confederation also had not signified its assent to the settlement. These were facts which might become of great importance in the event of a dispute.

Denmark had paid but little heed to the conditions agreed to in the Treaty of London. After promulgating a number of measures contrary to the agreement, and after much oppression of the German population and boycotting of their language, the programme of the powerful Eider-Danish party was carried out; and by royal charter on March 20, 1863, a new Constitution, conceived entirely in Danish interests, was granted to Holstein, paving the way for the incorporation of Schleswig, which did not belong to the German Confederation, in the Danish monarchy. Denmark, so far from withdrawing this charter at the invitation of the German Confederation, went even a step farther when threatened with 'Federal execution.' On November 13, 1863, the Danish Parliament passed the new Constitution for Denmark-Schleswig which had been laid before the House. Two days later King Frederick VII. died, and his successor, Christian IX., of the House of Glücksburg, was compelled to sign the new Constitution by his Minister Hall amid the menaces of the mob surrounding the royal castle.

These proceedings caused a great sensation throughout Germany; public opinion clamoured for the complete separation of the Duchies from Denmark under the rule of the Hereditary Prince Frederick of Augustenburg. The latter, in a proclamation issued Duke, according to the point of view of the authority quoted. As a matter of fact, his ducal title was never recognised in Prussia.

on November 16, 1863, from the Castle of Dolzig, declared that, 'by virtue of his father's deed of renunciation executed in his favour,' he assumed the government of Schleswig-Holstein, and appealed to the German Confederation for the support of his rights and the national privileges of the Duchies.

The majority of the German Cabinets were on the side of the Prince. The Grand-Duke Frederick of Baden, the Crown Prince's brother-in-law, was warmly interested in his favour, and instructed Herr von Mohl, the Ambassador of Baden to the Diet, to announce his accession to the Duchies as Duke Frederick VIII. to the Diet. In the Prussian Chamber the members Stavenhagen and Virchow introduced a motion for the recognition of Prince Frederick. On December 2 the Lower House declared, by 261 to 63 votes, that the honour and interest of Germany required the recognition and active support of the Hereditary Prince.

It is not to be wondered at that the Crown Prince also took the part of the Hereditary Prince, to whom he was united by old bonds of friendship. In early years, while at the University of Bonn, the Princes had first become intimate, and ever since they had been on the most cordial terms. During his period of service in the 1st Foot Guards, Prince Frederick had been constantly at the Prussian Court, and the Crown Prince had even stood godfather to one of the Prince's children. Thus, at a moment when the prospect of a dukedom lay before the Hereditary Prince, it was natural that he should endeavour to secure the friendly support of the Crown Prince and Princess of Prussia.



There were at that time three ways in which Prussia might decide the Schleswig-Holstein question. The most desirable of these, from the Prussian point of view, was the acquisition of the Duchies by Prussia. Secondly, there came the question of establishing the Augustenburg dynasty and the creation of a new so-called Middle State, provided that Prussian and German national interests were guaranteed. A third solution lay in the improvement of the position of the Duchies, either in the form of personal union or some other way. From the first Bismarck had kept the idea of annexation steadily in view without losing sight of the other modifications, but this aim remained his own secret. His next step, in conjunction with Austria at the Diet of Frankfort, was to decree the immediate enforcement of Federal execution against Denmark, on the ground of the Treaty of London, with the avowed object of forcing the Danish Government to withdraw the November Constitution and finally fulfil their engagements.

When the time for action arrived, the Crown Prince was in England, and as his personal relations with Bismarck were severed, he was entirely dependent for information on the reports forwarded to him by Duncker. The Crown Prince, who desired the immediate realization of the Augustenburg candidature, adopted the view that Prussia should at once proceed to occupy the Duchies in favour of Prince Frederick. He did not share the hope of his adviser, that another way might also lead to the same result.

The Crown Prince's views on the situation were set out in a letter addressed to Duncker on December 8 from Windsor Castle.

‘From Bismarck,’ wrote the Crown Prince, ‘I expect no result that will meet with my approval; he hates the Augustenburg family, and regards the national aspirations of Germany as revolutionary. He wishes to strengthen Denmark and adhere to the treaty. And that ends the matter. Prussia has to thank him for being again *too late* to assert her position at the head of Germany.’ He continued that he had expected that this would turn out to be the case when he heard the news of the death of King Frederick, and justified his absence from Berlin during the period of decision, inasmuch as he had not wished to give rise by his presence to the suspicion of being associated with that fatal policy. He had not even thought of being able to influence the King by supporting a policy opposed to that of Bismarck. ‘Here in England I have daily defended the cause of my dear friend Duke Frederick, well supported by my wife, who displays warm and thoroughly German feelings to a highly touching degree.’

We learn from an account by Major Theodor von Bernhardt how irrevocable, in the opinion of the Crown Prince, was the course of policy now entered upon by Prussia. On December 2 Bernhardt travelled by rail from Gotha to Weimar with the royal couple, who were on their journey home from England. It was arranged that Bernhardt should meet at Gotha, at one o’clock a.m., the train by which the Crown Prince was travelling from Frankfort to Berlin. On the arrival of the train at Gotha, the Hereditary Prince Frederick and Herr Samwer left the Crown Prince’s carriage; the Crown Prince also alighted, greeted Bernhardt, and asked: ‘Well, can you come with us?’

‘Yes, your Royal Highness, I can come as far as Weimar; I can get a return train there.’

In the carriage Bernhardi met the Crown Princess. In reply to her first hurried questions, he was obliged to confess that things looked black in Gotha as well as in Berlin; that the Hereditary Prince ought to hasten to Holstein; that instead of coming to a decision he and his counsellors demurred and raised endless difficulties.

In the conversation which ensued, Bernhardi alluded to Bismarck’s policy with the remark that a change of system alone could save Prussia, and that this must be brought about at all costs. The Crown Prince declared that his intervention would be absolutely hopeless; he had no power; all that he could say would be in vain, etc.

*Bernhardi*: ‘But no matter how small the chances of success are, every exertion must none the less be made; too much is at stake for things to be quietly left to take their course; it is a question of nothing less than the possible ruin of Prussia. Everybody must do his utmost: *that is one’s duty*.’

*The Crown Prince*: ‘My duty, you mean?’

*Bernhardi*: ‘The duty of us all; it is the duty of every Prussian to do his utmost. Above all, we must endeavour to win the King over to our views.’

To the Crown Prince’s question, how long Bernhardi was likely to stay in England,\* he replied that it would depend on circumstances. Unless Prince

\* At Duncker’s suggestion, Bernhardi had placed himself at the disposal of Prince Frederick, and had been commissioned by him to go to London and as far as possible represent the Prince’s interests there.

Frederick decided to start for Holstein in a few days, he, Bernhardi, would not go at all; and in any case he would return if Prussia were engaged in a serious war, and join the army. For, although he was advanced in years, he would still do his duty. This pleased the Crown Prince.

It may be mentioned here that in an audience granted to Bernhardi by the Queen of England, on June 3, 1864, Her Majesty touched upon the situation in Prussia, and the difficult and unpleasant position of the Crown Prince. She remarked that he naturally wished to hold aloof from the Government under the circumstances created by the present system. His real wish was to obtain a military command in the provinces, which would enable him to live at some distance from the capital; the post of Commander-in-Chief in Breslau would best meet his wishes.

Bernhardi replied that the position of the Crown Prince was certainly a very difficult one, and that there was much to be said in favour of his wish for a command in the provinces. At the same time there were many objections to such a course; the fact of his absenting himself for a time from the centre of affairs, and thus renouncing all his influence, might possibly tend to aggravate the general situation. The most intelligent Liberals, personal friends of the Crown Prince, were already lamenting that Queen Augusta, as well as the Prince himself, had been so long away from Berlin, as there was now no one from whom the King might have heard any views differing from those of the Reactionary party.

After the troops of the Federal execution had compelled the Danish force to retire from Holstein, the

Hereditary Prince was proclaimed as Duke Frederick VIII. in every community of Holstein. These proclamations were afterwards confirmed by the National Assembly at Elmshorn on December 27. Prince Frederick now left Gotha, his residence hitherto, and settled at Kiel, against the wish of King William, for the purpose of assuming his ducal functions on December 30. While there he more than once requested the advice and mediation of the Crown Prince.

It must be borne in mind that King William at first did not share Bismarck's disapproval of the candidature of the Prince of Augustenburg, and it required all the strong influence of the Minister-President to win the King over to his views about the Elbe Duchies.

The Augustenburg party, well knowing that their endeavours to enlist the sympathies of Herr von Bismarck would never be crowned with success, attempted to approach the King by the mediation of the Crown Prince, whose heart still warmed towards the Hereditary Prince. Their object was to obtain a promise to support the Prince from the monarch, and thus create a stumbling-block in the way of Bismarck's plans.

The following letter from the King to Bismarck, on January 16, 1864, refers to this matter :

‘My son came to me again this evening to present the request of the Hereditary Prince of Augustenburg that I would receive a letter from him by the hands of Herr Samwer, and for this purpose asked me to attend his soirée, where I could meet S. quite unobserved in a private apartment. I declined to do so before having read the Prince's letter, and commissioned my

son to send it to me. He did so, and I herewith enclose the letter. It contains nothing objectionable except at the close, where he asks me whether I cannot give S. any hope. Perhaps you could draw up an answer by to-morrow for me to give to Samwer. If I were willing to see him incognito at my son's, I could only give him the hope indicated in the stipulation, *i.e.*, that after victory we would see what new bases were to be established for the future, and to await the decision of Frankfort-on-the-Main regarding the succession.

‘W.’

On January 18 the King wrote again to Bismarck :

‘I have to inform you that after all I decided to see Samwer at my son's for about six or ten minutes in his presence. I spoke to him in the spirit of the answer which you prepared, but even more coolly, and very seriously. I laid especial stress on the point that the Prince was on no account to enter Schleswig.

‘W.’

The King's answer of January 18, 1864, reproached Prince Frederick with imprudence, and regretted that he was not surrounded by Conservative advisers, and that he had rendered it difficult for the King to defend the rights of the Duchies in a manner consonant with the wishes of the Hereditary Prince; it was, moreover, impossible for the King to enter into relations with Samwer, and entrust him with the reply, since he, as the Prince's Minister, had written to the Prussian Cabinet in a style as if the Prince were



already recognised as the Sovereign of Schleswig-Holstein. Only at the close did the old kindly feeling of the monarch display itself.

In order not to render the situation more serious, this letter remained unanswered. Only one point—the ‘Conservative advisers’—required explanation, and this was requested from the Crown Prince. On February 29 Samwer was informed by his friend Stockmar that the Crown Prince had replied with an energy and decision that had rejoiced his heart. The Crown Prince wrote that it was inconceivable that Samwer should have injured his cause with the King; that the Duke need not imagine that he could please Bismarck, for if there were not this to find fault with, the Minister would find something else. In the opinion of the Crown Prince, Samwer was the Duke’s good genius, and if he separated from him it would do him untold injury in public opinion.

The Schleswig-Holstein question now entered on a new phase owing to the declaration by which Austria and Prussia separated from the majority of the Diet. Both Powers had demanded that the Diet should require the King of Denmark to annul the new Constitution of the Duchy of Schleswig, and should also declare that, in the event of a refusal, the Confederation would occupy the Duchy, and hold it as a pledge for the fulfilment of its demands. On January 14 the Diet rejected this motion by 11 votes to 5, whereupon Austria and Prussia announced that they would jointly manage the affairs of Schleswig-Holstein, and accordingly issued an ultimatum four days later to Denmark demanding the annulment of the November Constitution within forty-eight hours. Immediately



after the refusal of the Danish Cabinet the allied troops set out for Schleswig under Field-Marshal von Wrangel, and opened the campaign by crossing the Eider on February 1.

Von Wrangel, at that time the only Field-Marshal in the Prussian service, had been selected for the command, in spite of the doubts of his capacity awakened by his advanced age, as it was essential to have an officer of the highest rank owing to the presence of the Austrian troops, commanded by Field-Marshal-Lieutenant von Gablenz. Whilst Prince Frederick Charles was appointed to the command of the Prussian contingent, the Crown Prince was attached to the Field-Marshal's staff, with the tacitly understood task of preventing any disastrous decisions on the part of the aged leader. The Crown Prince was accompanied by Major von Schweinitz and Captain von Lucadou as his aides-de-camp, and Prince Charles\* of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen as his orderly officer.

Subsequent events showed the importance of the Crown Prince's presence at headquarters. In the course of the campaign his views gained an ever-increasing influence on the momentous decisions that had to be taken. In the often serious disputes caused by rivalries among commanders as well as troops, the Crown Prince maintained order by his conciliatory, tactful, and unflinching attitude. Some even went so far as to assert that the Crown Prince alone showed any idea of strategical combinations on a large scale. Moltke had not been his instructor for nothing; and Heinrich von Treitschke declares that in this campaign the Crown Prince rendered his first important service

\* The present King of Roumania.

to the State, for by his energetic initiative bolder tactics became the order of the day.

By his kind and thoughtful behaviour towards the troops the Crown Prince soon won their whole-hearted affection; they cheered him enthusiastically wherever he appeared. Like a true soldier, he shared with them all the hardships of a winter campaign. The higher officers were also much impressed by the clearness and firmness of his judgment, as well as by his circumspection in difficult situations.

How extremely difficult official intercourse had become between the Chief of the General Staff and the Commander-in-Chief, Field-Marshal von Wrangel, is shown by a letter from General Vogel von Falckenstein to the Minister for War, Von Roon, written from headquarters at Damendorf, February 5 :

‘It passes all human understanding to grasp the difficulties which I have had to contend with in order to prevent disgrace being brought upon our undertaking.

‘Thank God! I meet with universal support for our military operations, especially from H.R.H. the Crown Prince, Prince Frederick Charles, and General von Gablenz, and I hope to overcome Scylla without falling into Charybdis.’

When years afterwards the official account of the Danish War by the General Staff exposed the futility of Wrangel's strategy in 1864, Professor Hans Delbrück wrote an essay on this subject in the Prussian *Jahrbücher*. The Crown Prince, after reading this essay, told Delbrück that he was glad to see the matter openly discussed at last. The Prince then related several incidents of the war, and among other

things he described the relations of the Commander-in-Chief with the Chief of the Staff. Although Wrangel had himself appointed General Vogel von Falckenstein to his staff, he had differences with him before long. When in the morning Falckenstein submitted a plan to him, Wrangel would say : ' No, my dear fellow ; we will not do it so, but in this way.' After a time Falckenstein would return, having rewritten the orders according to the altered instructions. ' No, my dear fellow ; you did not understand me. What I want is——' and then came Falckenstein's own proposal, which the old man had rejected in the morning. At last Falckenstein and his two colleagues, Podbielski and Stiehle, appealed to the Crown Prince. When in the morning the Field-Marshal had given an absolutely crazy order, the Crown Prince had to go to him in the afternoon, when the old man was more good-humoured and easy-going, and coax an alteration out of him.

Two days after the arrival of the Crown Prince at headquarters he received a deputation of burghers at Rendsburg on February 2, who gave him a hearty welcome, as the fact of his taking part in the war encouraged hopes of the fulfilment of all their wishes for an undivided Schleswig-Holstein under Duke Frederick VIII. The Crown Prince replied as follows :

' Although I cannot as yet give the Prince you mention that title—I am here simply as a soldier, and beg you to consider me as such, and also as your countryman—I join your prayers that Providence will promote your welfare. You know that my relations with my cousin have long been of the most friendly character. I shall inform my royal father that you

have welcomed me so kindly. You can rely upon it that his heart is also in the matter.'

At Flensburg, on February 10, the Crown Prince received a deputation of citizens, who begged him to use his influence in order that 'we Schleswig-Holsteiners may soon be subject to our lawful ruler, our beloved Duke Frederick VIII. . . . and that our town may soon be cleared of all Eider-Danish officials, who are our worst enemies.' The Crown Prince, in reply, made reference to the answer which he had given to the Rendsburg deputation, that he sympathized warmly with the wishes of the country and the Hereditary Prince of Augustenburg, but that he was here only as a soldier. He thanked them for their gratitude to the Prussian Army, and would inform his royal father of their feelings.

What straits the Crown Prince was often driven to in order to counteract the unfortunate orders of Field-Marshal von Wrangel is illustrated by the following incident related by him to Professor Delbrück :

'On approaching the frontier of Jutland, an order, based on diplomatic reasons, not to cross the frontier was received from Berlin. Wrangel was much annoyed, and, resolving to disregard this order, sent for General Flies to give him private instructions without a staff officer being present. Falckenstein and the others, guessing his intentions, at once went to the Crown Prince and asked for his assistance. The Crown Prince thereupon went towards Wrangel's quarters and stationed himself at a cross-road which Flies had to pass on his way back, but which Wrangel could not see from his windows. Here the Crown Prince waited for Flies, and asked him what orders he had

from the Field-Marshal. Flies was a man of the old martinet type, and declined to answer. 'Then I will tell you,' said the Crown Prince: 'he ordered you to cross the frontier of Jutland to-morrow.' Somewhat alarmed, Flies admitted the fact. 'Well, if Your Royal Highness knows it already, there is no necessity for me to conceal it.' 'Of course I know it,' continued the Crown Prince, 'and I order you not to do so.' Flies replied with decision: 'I am not in a position to take such an order.' The Crown Prince rejoined: 'I give you the order in the King's name, and take the responsibility of it upon myself.' Flies thereupon considered himself justified in promising to obey.

The advanced guard of the Guards Division, however, entered Kolding a few days later, on February 13, 1864, before receiving the order not to cross the frontier of Jutland. A victorious engagement of the Hussars of the Guard with the Danish cavalry took place north of Kolding, but next morning the Commander-in-Chief suddenly resolved to evacuate Kolding. Here, however, the influence of the Crown Prince prevailed, this being all the more natural, as the Field-Marshal, who had preserved great bodily activity notwithstanding his advanced age, did not always pay sufficient regard to the often complicated considerations of strategy. An order to evacuate Kolding, which was drawn up at 8.30 a.m. and signed by the Field-Marshal, was not issued, as the Crown Prince represented that the withdrawal of the troops was unjustifiable from a military point of view, and that in any case the King's orders must be awaited. Thus the advanced guard continued to hold Kolding.

The Crown Prince witnessed the reconnaissance in force in front of Düppel (near Nübel) on February 22, 1864, from a hill north of Schmöl. During the action he was constantly exposed to the fire of the heavy artillery from the entrenchments.

After the Crown Prince's departure for headquarters, Bismarck found the King's resistance to his views greatly diminished, though he had not as yet entirely succeeded in overcoming the King's sympathies with the Prince of Augustenburg.

In conducting his candidature, the Hereditary Prince had kept the object in view of gaining the support of Prussia. Naturally, Prussia was to receive certain desirable advantages in exchange for her assistance. In this matter he availed himself of the Crown Prince's mediation, and mentioned the concessions he was prepared to offer in return for Prussia's championship.

On February 24 the Crown Prince wrote to Prince Frederick from Hadersleben, thanking him for his letter and expressing his hope of a favourable issue. He said that every endeavour was being made to avoid the establishment of official communication with him *quâ* Duke, and that caution was therefore necessary, though there could be no objection to a simple communication between friends.

Two days later he forwarded the Prince's letter to the King, with his own remarks (February 26) on the concessions\* he considered desirable. He indicated

\* At the conclusion of peace with Denmark, on October 30, 1864, conditions were formulated under which the Berlin Cabinet agreed to the formation of a new State of Schleswig-Holstein as not endangering the interests of Prussia and Germany. They



the following demands on the part of Prussia as being justified by circumstances: Rendsburg to become a Federal fortress; Kiel a Prussian naval station; the entry of Schleswig-Holstein in the Zollverein; the construction of a canal between the North Sea and the Baltic; finally, a military and naval convention with Prussia; and he entertained the hope that the Hereditary Prince would willingly accede to these terms.

The King acknowledged the receipt of the letter on February 28, and wrote: 'I am fully sensible of his (the Hereditary Prince's) wish to meet us halfway, but this course would necessitate his recognition by us. Although I have still every sympathy for him and his cause, the opponents of this recognition increase in number with every step that brings us nearer to the end of the war.'

After the battle at Düppel, on February 22, the King bestowed the Fourth Class of the Red Eagle upon the Crown Prince. In a letter to Duncker, the Crown Prince modestly expressed himself deeply touched by the paternal mark of favour, while at the same time he was ashamed 'to be decorated after so little experience and active service, while as yet no officer has received any mark of distinction, although deserved by many.'

On March 8 the Crown Prince was present at the engagement before Fredericia (near Hejse Cro), and again was under fire by the side of the Commander-in-Chief. About this time a modification of the chief

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were communicated to Vienna on February 22, 1865, and coincided with those recommended by the Crown Prince.



command took place, which was generally recognised to be necessary. In virtue of this new arrangement, special powers were entrusted by the King to the Crown Prince, so that the leadership was practically placed in his hands. Hitherto his activity under very difficult conditions had been restricted to the exercise of his personal influence, but Wrangel now received instructions not to issue any military order without having first consulted the Crown Prince.

Some expressions in a letter from General von Goeben are worthy of note, since they show the active part taken in this war by the Crown Prince :

‘Directly after dinner the Crown Prince came in. I must tell you that he is doing wonders here, to the surprise and delight of all persons of discernment. He is extremely discreet and intelligent, and has the happiest influence upon old Wrangel, who is really *very* aged. He remained with me for a quarter of an hour, discussing the situation; as he was going to Ballegard, I offered to ride with him, which he accepted with thanks. In this way . . . I talked everything over with him . . . ; the Prince is unusually clear and circumspect in his views. He accompanied me back again, and was really remarkably pleasant and friendly.’

On the day before the storming of the entrenchments at Düppel, the Crown Prince addressed the following reply to two political letters from Herr von Bismarck. The cordial tone of this document shows that a distinct improvement had taken place in their relations since the preceding year. But it is also interesting in another respect, as it shows that the Crown Prince then regarded the future events of 1866

as absolutely impossible, while Bismarck's mind was already filled with mighty projects.

'HEADQUARTERS AT FLENSBURG,  
'April 17, 1864.

'Many thanks for your two letters of April 11 and 12. The communication of the 11th is very interesting; but I am unable to grasp the aim of your policy sufficiently to enable me to support any single measure with conviction from my own standpoint. I am not of opinion that it is too early to come forward with a definite programme, and I fear that we shall gain nothing by postponing the solution of the question; on the contrary, we shall increase European complications by so doing. However this may be, we ought at least to have a positive programme for *ourselves*, the realization of which would depend on circumstances. Instead of this, I only find in your communication the proposal "to act according to circumstances," unless I am to conclude from a few scattered indications that you have certain secret intentions, such as are attributed to you, and which certainly appear to coincide with many of your earlier utterances, especially at the last Council of State I attended before joining the army. In reference to all such *arrière-pensées* as to the aggrandizement of Prussia, I will give my opinion in a few words: the pursuit of your scheme will throw out the whole of our German policy, and will probably lead to our downfall in Europe. It would not be the first time that Prussia had attempted to outwit the world, with the result of finding herself in the end between two stools.'

On April 18 the entrenchments of Düppel were stormed. The Crown Prince and Field-Marshal von Wrangel witnessed the first part of the attack from the hill near the Gammelmark battery, and the further course of it from the Spitzberg and afterwards further to the front on the Sonderburg highroad. Two officers from headquarters were told off to each of the six storming columns, in order to report at once on the progress and success of the attack to the Crown Prince and the Field-Marshal. It was due to the Crown Prince, who obtained the order in question from the King, that the attack did not commence from the second parallel—as Prince Frederick Charles desired—but that they advanced nearer to the enemy.

When the news of the victory was brought to Prince Frederick Charles, he bared his head, his example being followed by the Crown Prince, Prince Albrecht, his son Prince Albrecht, Prince Charles, and all the Generals and aides-de-camp: Prince Frederick Charles in deep emotion exclaimed: ‘I thank God and our brave army for this glorious victory.’

Overcome with joy, the Crown Prince warmly embraced his cousin. The solemnity of this striking scene was heightened by the groaning of the wounded, who lay in and before the entrenchments. The Crown Prince spoke words of praise and thanks to the victorious troops. To the men of the 35th Regiment he called out: ‘You are real heroes! How glad your King will be to hear of your brave deeds!’

On April 21 the King arrived at the seat of war; he was received by the Crown Prince at Flensburg. On the afternoon of the same day he reviewed the storming columns beyond Gravenstein on the so-called

Büffelkoppel (Buffalo's Hill), on which occasion by royal command the men marched past in the weather-stained uniforms they had worn at the capture of the Düppel redoubts. On the following day the King ordered that the Crown Prince's regiment should henceforth be called after its chief, and bear the name 1st East Prussian Grenadier Regiment 'Crown Prince.' The Prince's pleasure at this distinction was expressed in the following lines, written from Flensburg to the commander of his regiment :

' His Majesty the King has graciously bestowed the name of "Crown Prince" upon my beloved regiment. Nothing could honour me more nor give me greater delight after the glorious events of the campaign and of April 18 ; mention this to all my regimental comrades, of whom I have thought so often during these achievements.'

The Emperor of Austria bestowed the Knights' Cross of the Order of Maria Theresa on the Crown Prince, in order to mark his recognition of the importance of the victory.

After the capture of the Düppel entrenchments, the Crown Prince wrote to Max Duncker :

' I shall never forget my experiences and indescribable, sharply contrasting feelings at Düppel on April 18. I thanked God that after fifty years Prussia was still in 1864 the same nation in arms that she was at the time of the great War of Liberation, and that the army had done its duty, and fully justified the confidence placed in it.'

The Crown Prince would have been glad if an armistice had been concluded, which might have enabled him to leave the army and return home.

'As you know what a happy home awaits me,' he wrote to Duncker, 'you will understand that my prolonged absence falls heavy on me.'

Although the military successes achieved by the allied troops filled the Prince with proud satisfaction, the terrible sights on the field of battle and in the hospitals deeply moved his humane feelings. Obeying the noble dictates of his heart, he sought to take a leading part in healing the wounds of sorrow and distress caused by the war. His profound sympathy with every form of the miseries of life found a fitting expression in the foundation of a fund to aid the disabled and support the families of those who had fallen fighting for their country.

On May 18 the command of the army was transferred from Wrangel to Prince Frederick Charles, and by this change the Crown Prince's mission came to an end.

A few days previously the Crown Prince had left the seat of war, in consequence of the armistice, to meet his consort in Hamburg; after a separation of more than three months, she had hastened to join him, hoping to return with him by Lübeck to Berlin and Potsdam. The Crown Princess had originally had the intention of going as far as Schleswig, to visit the Prince in the midst of the victorious army and to manifest her sympathy with the wounded in the hospitals. But, yielding to urgent advice, she eventually gave up this plan and restricted herself to the visit to Hamburg.

On his journey to Hamburg the Crown Prince was received everywhere with great festivities. In Rendsburg especially the heartiest enthusiasm was

manifested for the Heir Apparent of Prussia. Some young ladies presented him with a laurel wreath, as well as several bouquets for his consort, which the Prince received in his winning way with the remark: 'Why, I am bringing a whole springtide of flowers to my wife!'

On May 14 a meeting in Hamburg between the Crown Prince and the Hereditary Prince Frederick gave rise to the most far-fetched conjectures and political auguries. How little ground there was for serious concern may be seen from a letter from Samwer to Duke Ernest of Coburg, dated May 19, 1864, in which he says among other things: 'There is nothing of significance to report to your Highness concerning the interview of the Duke (Prince Frederick) with the Crown Prince and Princess. The only thing is that the Crown Prince takes a graver view of the annexation schemes than is generally taken. . . . I did not accompany the Duke, in order to prevent any political significance being attached to the interview. The King did not give his consent to the meeting, but only expressly forbade the Crown Prince to see the Prince in Holstein.'

The Crown Prince and Princess went from Hamburg to Lübeck, and left there on the 17th, the Princess going to the summer residence at Potsdam, and the Prince travelling straight to Berlin to greet his royal father.

The King requited the Crown Prince's services in the campaign by bestowing upon him the Third Class of the Order of the Red Eagle, afterwards the Grand Cross of the same Order, and by appointing him on May 18 to the command of the 2nd Army Corps.

The part taken by the Crown Prince in this campaign has been the subject of the following critical appreciation by Field-Marshal Count von Blumenthal, who was Chief of the Prince's Staff in 1866 and 1870-71 :

‘On the occasion of a General Staff ride in 1854 in the Nieder-Lausitz under the direction of General von Reyher, in which I took part, I not only recognised the rare qualities of heart and universal kindly feeling that animated His Royal Highness, but I also found repeated opportunities of convincing myself that he possessed a simple, clear and natural judgment on warfare, notwithstanding a still imperfect military education. He was fond of discussing strategical situations, and also allowed himself to be convinced and instructed by sound argument, without obstinately holding fast to a preconceived view or opinion. This particular characteristic may have induced superficial judges at that time to regard him as vacillating and undecided, and lacking the true military instinct in spite of his strikingly fine martial appearance. I by no means shared this opinion, for even then I saw indications that he, indeed, possessed qualities which would prove him pre-eminently fitted for military command as well as for his exalted destiny as a ruler.

‘The campaign of 1864 against Denmark repeatedly confirmed this opinion of mine. The military and diplomatic position of His Royal Highness in regard to Field-Marshal Count Wrangel was altogether a suitable school for the future General. It gave him an insight into the inner workings of the staff which so seldom come to the knowledge of a Commander-in-



Chief, and yet have such a powerful effect on the issue of affairs.

‘The experience gained in this manner by His Royal Highness had a most favourable influence upon his subsequent career as a commander, and enabled him to appreciate the work which devolved on his staff in later important campaigns. It is impossible for me to say what direct part His Royal Highness took in the decisions of the Commander-in-Chief, Field-Marshal Count Wrangel, since I, as Chief of the Staff of Prince Frederick Charles, was always some miles away from the supreme command, and thus was not in daily communication with the same. On the other hand, I often had occasion to observe the favourable influence of His Royal Highness on the decisive operations of the 1st Army Corps when these were complicated by orders, instructions, and political news from Berlin, and often had to be altered in spite of the opposing views of the General in command. At these times the Crown Prince often acted as mediator, and supported an energetic plan of campaign without paying undue attention to political considerations. This was especially the case in April, 1864, when an attempt at crossing from Ballegard to the island of Alsen was prevented by stormy weather, and when the siege and capture of the entrenchments at Düppel became necessary. The Crown Prince was at his post on both occasions, as well as in almost all the more important engagements in Sunderwitt, and I gathered from the opinions and remarks he uttered that he was against all half-measures, and always urged bringing about a decision without too nervous a regard for the necessary sacrifices.

‘The numerous conversations which I had with the Crown Prince in Gravenstein were of great value to me personally, and filled me with veneration and gratitude. Through a series of unfortunate events, which I am unable to touch upon more closely, my position as Chief of the Staff to His Royal Highness Prince Frederick Charles had become so difficult that, unless I had found some support, I should have been unable to remain in his service. In my trouble, I therefore spoke openly on several occasions to the Crown Prince, and begged for his advice and mediation. With winning kindness and simple clearness of judgment, he always succeeded in tranquillizing me, pointing out that I must place my duty first, and suppress the feelings of agitation and vexation which might act as a hindrance to it. In this way a mediation would not be necessary. These repeated interviews enabled me to become acquainted not only with the Crown Prince’s strongly defined sense of duty, but also with his simple, clear, and sound views on military matters, and I gained the firm conviction that he would some day do great things as a leader in war. The subsequent campaigns in which His Royal Highness played such a conspicuous and successful part are a sufficient proof of the accuracy of the opinion I conceived so forcibly at that time. If, however, his excellent military qualities have not been fully recognised by individual critics in spite of the great results achieved, the fact is due to conditions, found in every army, which not seldom expose the greatest General to unmerited blame. A blackamoor cannot be washed white, and a man cannot be convinced against his will, or who shuts his eyes to facts

rather than alter or modify his own hasty and superficial judgment.'

The Schleswig-Holstein question had now moved back from the military into the diplomatic sphere. On May 19 Bismarck sent for Privy Councillor Duncker, and informed him that Prussia's policy was now at an important turning-point. As the interests of the Royal Family and the State were involved, and the Crown Prince was so closely concerned in these, he desired that His Royal Highness should continue to be fully acquainted with the situation. He would therefore, in view of the important interests at stake, not withhold the most secret details, as he had full confidence in the Crown Prince's absolute secrecy.

'I have succeeded,' continued Bismarck, 'in doing what seemed impossible to most people—that is, in inducing Austria to repudiate the Treaty of London. The independence of the Duchies, together with the material guarantees we demanded for them at the Conference, were at once rejected by the Danes. The dynastic question thus rises into prominence. I have nothing against the Augustenburg party. It is of no great importance to Prussia to possess 200 to 300 more German square miles of land, together with half a million subjects, if she can obtain the advantages offered by the possession of this territory by other means. The great point is with regard to the navy. We also need the canal, which we have already demanded in London. A military Convention is desirable, but not imperative. In addition to holding such a position in the Duchies, we require guarantees of Conservative government.'

It was now, he continued, for the Hereditary Prince

to take the initiative. As the Crown Prince was on friendly terms with the Augustenburger, the idea suggested itself that he might give him a hint that those Conservative guarantees were an indispensable condition of recognition. Duncker must undertake to persuade the Crown Prince to communicate this to the Hereditary Prince. In conclusion, Bismarck mentioned the subject of annexation. He understood that the views of the Crown Prince were decidedly against this course.

‘To speak openly to you, we can effect the annexation whenever we please. Austria would rather see the Duchies in our hands than in those of the Hereditary Prince Frederick. Bavaria and Württemberg are so much alarmed at the establishment of a Democratic stronghold on the Elbe that they would even prefer an augmentation of our territory. Herr von Beust is also in agreement with this idea. France agrees to annexation, in the hope of embroiling us thereby with England and Austria; she desires no further engagements on our part. In regard to England this hope might be realized, unless the English reconcile themselves to the *fait accompli*, as I believe they will; in regard to Austria there is no chance of it. I am not acting in the Danish question without an understanding with Austria, and this is the basis of our security against France. Russia is again endeavouring to come to an agreement with France upon affairs in the East. She, perhaps, has objections to the annexation, but is not likely to take action against us.’

After this interview with Bismarck, the particulars of which were faithfully reported by Duncker to the Crown Prince, there followed several more interviews

between the Prince's Councillor and the Minister-President. In the course of these, Duncker was commissioned by Bismarck to obtain through the Crown Prince that the Prince Frederick should come as if on his own initiative and make his proposals in Berlin.

The Hereditary Prince accordingly arrived in Berlin on the morning of June 1. After paying a visit to the Crown Prince at Potsdam in the morning, and to the King in the afternoon, he had an interview in the evening, of three hours' duration, with Bismarck, which, however, led to no result. The Hereditary Prince declared himself unable to accept certain important points of Bismarck's demands, while Bismarck gave him to understand that he understood his position, and also did not conceal from him that no conditions, not even the risk of a European war, would induce Prussia to accept the rôle of 'one who had done his work and could be shunted.'

On June 25, the London Conference, opened on April 25, was dissolved without any result. The Danes insisted that the river Schlei should be the new frontier of Schleswig, while Austria and Prussia declared themselves for a line passing through Apenrade and Tondern. England proposed to submit the point to arbitration, but this suggestion was only agreed to by the German Powers on the condition of being free to accept or reject its decision. France then proposed a *plébiscite* in the mixed district of Schleswig, between Schlei and Apenrade. But neither Denmark nor Austria and Prussia would agree to this.

Hostilities thereupon recommenced between the

belligerent Powers ; on June 29 the island of Alsen was taken, and after the German arms had gained further successes in Jutland and also at sea, the Danish Cabinet decided to sue for peace. On July 26 peace negotiations were opened in Vienna, between Austria and Prussia on the one part and Denmark on the other ; on August 1 the preliminaries of peace were agreed upon, and on October 30 the treaty was signed by which the Duchies of Schleswig, Holstein and Lauenburg became independent of Denmark.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE HOME LIFE OF THE CROWN PRINCE

1864—1865

THE military inspections undertaken by the Crown Prince in June, as Commander-in-Chief of the 2nd Army Corps, quartered in the garrisoned towns of Pomerania, were interrupted by a short visit to Prince and Princess Putbus in the island of Rügen. On their return to Berlin they took up their residence at the New Palace at Potsdam.

At this period Gustav zu Putlitz, the well-known dramatic author, held the office of Chamberlain to the Crown Princess. Some of the incidents of these happy weeks, illustrative of the domestic life of the royal couple, are related in his diary-like letters to his wife :

‘PUTBUS,

‘*June 26, 1864.*

‘I arrived here yesterday after a two hours’ journey. I was shown into the drawing-room, which was empty, but immediately the door opened, and the Crown Princess came in with Princess Putbus. . . . The Crown Princess wished to go for a drive, but it poured



with rain, and I spent a most charming hour in the following way. As I was passing through the drawing-room on the way to my room, I came upon the Crown Princess with Countess Hedwig Brühl, the former being engaged in searching for the text of a song of Goethe's, which she partly knew from memory, while Hedwig played the air. They could not find the song in Goethe, and I did so for them. Then we had a most interesting conversation about literature. The Crown Princess is marvellously well read; she has literally read everything, and knows everything more or less by heart. She showed us a print, which had just arrived, of a drawing she had executed for the benefit of the Crown Prince's Fund. It consists of four pictures as a souvenir of the victory at Diïppel—four soldiers, full-length figures, representing four different branches of the services. The first, before the attack (morning). The second, waving the standard (noon). The third, wounded, is listening to "Now thank we all our God" (afternoon). The fourth, the victor, with helmet and laurel wreath, stands mourning at an open grave (evening). The last was finished, and was exceedingly powerful and natural, without any sentimentality. It is conceived with real genius and most artistically executed. This young Princess has more than average gifts, and, besides, is more cultured than any woman I know of her age. . . . And, then, she has such charming manners, which put one perfectly at one's ease in spite of royal etiquette.

'Now that the Crown Princess is not allowed to ride, she is in the habit of driving out twice a day for several hours, practising pistol-shooting, etc. In fact,

she possesses a mental and physical energy of which Count Häseler relates wonders.

‘P.S.—No one knows how long we shall stay here. The Crown Princess wishes to remain, although Danish gunboats are cruising round the island.

‘June 27 (after dinner).

‘This morning I had just closed your letter, when at nine o’clock the Crown Princess sent for me in the garden. A despatch from the Crown Prince gave her permission to remain unless the naval captains think it likely that the Danes may land. I telegraphed in all directions. Six Danish ships are in sight, but our naval officers think there is very little danger. Breakfast at ten, then a drive to the shooting-box. The view from the tower gives a fine panorama of the island. A Danish ship was in sight, and also our gunboats cruising round the island. The Crown Princess ascended the tower. I do not know what she has not a passion for—music, art, literature, the army, the navy, riding and hunting. On leaving she went down the mountain on foot, and I accompanied her through the rain-swept wood. She took the last number of the *Grenzboten* from her pocket, and gave it me. It is astonishing that she not only reads, but commits everything to memory, and she discusses history like a historian, with excellent judgment and decision. After dinner the Crown Princess sang English and Spanish songs with a pleasant voice and true musical expression.

‘June 28 (early).

‘Yesterday I had a very agreeable conversation with the Crown Princess about Hebbel, whose poems

she knows very well. But the Danes are still the chief subject, since a landing on Rügen may be expected. But it seems to me that there is little to fear, for, if it came to the worst, there would still be time to escape by Stralsund.

‘PUTBUS,

‘June 29, 1864.

‘Yesterday I had rather a tiring day. At nine I attended the Crown Princess in the garden. Telegrams come from all parts of the island, announcing how many Danish ships are in sight and where. Yesterday there were three or four. The Crown Princess wished to see them. After breakfast we went for a four hours’ drive in a little hunting carriage with four horses, the Crown Princess, Hedwig Brühl, Herr von Strantz and myself. We were in and out of the carriage, and walked up a hill that gave us a view of the sea and the Danish ships, which even I could see with the naked eye, much more the sharp young eyes of the Crown Princess. Then came the business of the bouquet—I mean a bouquet of wild-flowers. She wanted every kind of flower we could find, and she knew the names of each variety in English, German, and Latin. We picked a large quantity during our walk. Every moment we stopped she jumped out of the carriage and picked a flower which her keen eye had discovered, and which was not in the bouquet.

‘P.S.—Rügen is strongly garrisoned, and a landing of the Danes is expected, so the night despatches announce. The Crown Prince is at Stettin to-day. We are going there immediately.’

‘STETTIN, *June 30.*

‘At the end of my letter of yesterday I told you of our sudden move from Putbus. I had had the Crown Princess’s saloon carriage brought to Stralsund the day before by way of precaution. The journey passed off very well, without any stoppages. Our party included the Crown Princess, Hedwig Brühl, Prince Putbus, Lucadou, and myself, as far as Stralsund; then on here. It was a pleasant journey. The Crown Princess talked quite openly and very pleasantly on all kinds of subjects, such as personal incidents, politics, art, and literature, all in a bright and clever manner. At the same time she displayed unaffected energy, setting about and arranging everything herself. We talked for five whole hours without interruption, except at the stations, where there were crowds of people, who threw flowers into the carriage, and interrupted our conversation with endless cheers. Here we were met by the Crown Prince. He was very pleasant to all, myself included, and looks exceedingly well. At headquarters, where we got out, everything was still in disorder. The Crown Princess began putting things right at once—had furniture moved and pictures hung—and in half an hour the old place had gained a certain air of comfort under her guiding hand. But the whole expedition was a failure, for the Crown Prince cannot stay on. He leaves to-day for Stralsund, and only comes back for flying visits, so we are going to-day to Potsdam.’

‘THE NEW PALACE,

‘*June 31, 1864.*

‘We had a busy time at Stettin. The Crown Prince left at eight o’clock, and the Crown Princess

set about the arrangement of the rooms, as the headquarters are to be fitted up for the Crown Prince, who will remain there for some months. Wall-papers were chosen, furniture set in place, pictures hung, all these things having been brought from the palace at Berlin. Then we went through the whole house with the architect, and the Princess gave her directions in a prompt and practical manner. Then we drove out to make purchases of furniture, and the necessary articles for the writing-table and washstand. Everything was suitably and thoughtfully chosen.

‘We then had a lively conversation about the Court at Schwerin. The Crown Princess speaks very highly of the Grand-Duke and the young Grand-Duchess, and also of the children, which pleased me very much. Then we touched upon the English drama and literature, and that was very interesting. I am kept in continual amazement by her youthful and natural bearing, so full of versatility, decision and good sense, and I have to remember that I have only known her for a few days. We were only half an hour in the palace at Berlin, but the Crown Princess showed me all over it, as I told her I had never gone farther than the room containing the visitors’ book.’

‘NEW PALACE,

‘*July 1, 1864.*

‘Yesterday evening we had tea at half-past seven. Besides myself there were Hedwig Brühl, Fräulein von Dobeneck, and Herr von Normann.\* After tea we

\* Ernst von Stockmar, the private secretary to the Crown Prince and Princess, had been obliged to resign his post through illness. His place was filled, at first temporarily, by Captain Karl von Normann.

went into the Princess's room. The young mistress of the palace was sitting at a spinning-wheel, in a very simple black woollen dress, her hair bound with a black ribbon ; she was spinning and singing snatches of all manner of songs, accompanied by a rather absent-minded-looking Lady-in-Waiting. At a little distance a Chamberlain was reading poems by Geibel, or prompting others by Heine and Goethe which were recited by the royal lady at the wheel. There you have a complete picture, and it is curious to think that this is in the palace built by Frederick the Great in ridicule of Austria and France, enlivened by the most curious entertainments of his successor, decorated by Frederick William III. in the stiff fashion of the day, at the time of the festivities in honour of his imperial daughter, thrown open by Frederick William IV. at the representation of "Antigone" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream" to an intellectual and artistic audience, and now the picture of informal modern culture. I like the last best.'

' July 2, 1864.

'The royal children are very sweet and very well brought up. One can see the influence of the straightforward nature of Sophie Dobeneck. The Crown Princess is strict with the children, which is very laudable in so young a mother, who from her position has neither the time nor the obligation to take an active part in their education.

'People will open their eyes at this gifted and cultured nature, when once free rein is given to her will.'

‘ July 3, 1864.

‘ The Crown Princess would like a book to be written about the New Palace, and discussed the plan with me at some length.

‘ This morning I was commissioned by the Crown Princess to write to Geibel, and thank him for a poem on Düppel, which he sent her. . . .

‘ In the afternoon the Crown Princess went to the Peacocks’ Island, accompanied by Hedwig Brühl, Herr von Normann and myself. There she had her little one-horse chaise, and drove herself. It was really a delightful afternoon, and I keep on wondering at the originality of this gifted young Princess. At eight we took tea in the little garden which the Crown Princess has had made here close to the palace, and which is very pretty and pleasant.

‘ After dinner the children came in : they are indeed delightful. I gave the Princes rides on my head, and they come running from quite a distance when they catch sight of me. Prince William is a very bright child—he looks healthy and fresh ; and Prince Henry is charming.

‘ Tea in the little garden. Then I read aloud out of “ *Schön Ellen*,” which the Crown Princess did not know, and by which she was moved to tears. This led to anecdotes and details of the war in India, and Hedwig Brühl was commissioned to write to England for a picture of the Defence of Lucknow for Geibel.’

‘ July 6, 1864.

‘ At half-past five the Crown Princess drove to the station to meet the Crown Prince. We were all assembled, and he gave us a hearty greeting.



‘Tea in the little garden at half-past seven. I was most agreeably impressed by the Crown Prince this evening. His manners are perfect; he is friendly and cheerful, and grave, simple and frank in serious conversation. The whole company went for a walk after tea, and we talked chiefly about historical recollections of the New Palace, always with reference to the present. It was a real pleasure to me. Here one feels perfectly secure from intrigue, and only meets with frankness and clear intelligence. All evil designs must necessarily fail in the end before such qualities. About nine o’clock we were dismissed, and the royal couple continued their walk alone.’

‘*July 7, 1864.*

‘Yesterday was a particularly pleasant day, not because of any special incident or anything of exceptional interest, but from the whole spirit animating our little circle. The Crown Princess was full of gaiety, and the Crown Prince really delightful as regards manners, mood, and amiability. The two natures complete each other perfectly, and the mutual influence is unmistakably a happy one. The royal couple had breakfasted alone, and I was on the point of going into the town, after sending off several letters, when I met them down on the terrace, both full of almost childlike merriment. Then came the royal children. Prince William was riding his little pony, when his hat fell off and struck it between its ears: the animal reared, and the Prince was thrown off on his back. Both parents remained quite calm, and apparently took no notice: the Prince mounted again and went on riding. Their whole education

seems very sensible, and this is proved by results, for the children are quite natural, obedient, bright and well behaved. One of them came up after another. This unceremonious company was very charming, and I rejoiced at the really perfectly happy relations of all. Prince William wore a very nice simple frock of gray linen the other day, and I asked Fräulein von Dobeneck for the pattern of it. The Crown Princess said yesterday: "Remember me to your wife, and tell her, as you liked the frock, I am having one made for your son, to remind you of William when you are at home again." Was it not kind of her?

'After tea we had glees. The Prince was very cheerful, talked about my writings most pleasantly, and spoke of our own history and of modern politics and persons with much knowledge and candour. The Princess joined the conversation with intelligent and often surprising observations. This was certainly the best evening that I have spent here, and all the more welcome to me as it displayed the Crown Prince in such a favourable light, and at the same time revealed the perfect harmony of this union, in which the Crown Prince, notwithstanding the more brilliant qualities of the Princess, still preserves his simple and natural attitude and undeniable influence. Absolute sincerity is the chief characteristic of his entire nature. One can see many points in him which remind one of the King.'

'July 8, 1864.

'... Yesterday we talked a great deal of Queen Louise and Frederick William III.; in what an ideal light the former is always represented, and how the

King had become so popular, in spite of his roughness, and although he made the nation famous more by the force of circumstances than by his own deeds. I suggested that it was the sight of a happy marriage and family upon the throne for the first time, together with the common misfortune of the King and the people, that had afforded a natural basis for his popularity. In this household one may really lay stress on this point, for the union is undoubtedly a happy one.

‘The New Palace will certainly be their favourite residence, and is going to be improved and re-decorated.

‘*Afternoon.*

‘I told Hedwig Brühl, who asked me why I was so serious, that the state of your health gives me anxiety. The Crown Princess came at once, and made the kindest inquiries. After dinner it seemed as though she wished to be especially kind, for she called me into her room, and gave me photographs of her apartments here, the garden, her own portrait, and one of the Prince and the royal children; in short, it was her kind wish to give me pleasure at a time of sadness. The Crown Prince asked for a new photograph of you; he said that the one you had sent was almost an insult to the recipient as well as to you.’

!

‘*July 10, 1864.*

‘This is my last letter. I have been the guest of a most highly gifted Princess and a most wonderful woman, rich in mind, culture, energy, kindness and

benevolence. The acquaintance is most valuable to me. The Crown Prince has completely won my heart.'

A third son was born to the royal pair on September 15, 1864. The christening took place a month later, on his father's birthday, when the child received the names Franz Friedrich Sigismund.

About this time the celebrated English geologist, Sir Charles Lyell, was received by the Crown Princess during his stay in Berlin. It was he who first made known to the public a detailed account of the Crown Princess's scientific studies. The Princess showed herself well acquainted with the latest products of scientific investigation. She knew Lyell's 'Principles of Geology' and his work 'The Antiquity of Man,' written under the influence of Darwin. Lyell had an animated conversation with the Crown Princess upon Darwinism.

'She was very much *au fait*,' writes Lyell to Darwin, 'with the "Origin" [Darwin's remarkable work 'On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection'] and Huxley's book ['Evidence as to Man's Place in Nature'], with the "Antiquity" and with the Lacustrine Museums which she lately saw in Switzerland. She said that, after twice reading you, she could not see her way as to the origin of four things, namely, the world, species, man, or the black and white races. Did one of the latter come from the other, or both from some common stock? And she asked what I was doing, and I explained that in recasting the "Principles" I had to give up the independent creation of each species. She said she

fully understood my difficulty, because after your book the old opinions had received a blow from which they would never recover.’\*

In the latter part of June, 1865, Gustav zu Putlitz and his wife were again the guests of the Crown Prince at Potsdam. Frau zu Putlitz gives an account of her visit in the following letters to her sister :†

‘ June 20, 1865.

‘ The Crown Princess received us, and expressed her pleasure at our arrival in the kindest manner : “ Fritz† said at once that you would certainly come if you could, but I was afraid that you might have other plans.” We accompanied the Crown Princess into her little gardens, which, surrounded by beech hedges, lie close to the palace, and are kept as neatly as little jewel-boxes ; she laid them out and arranged them herself. The strawberries, growing on beds of white moss, look charming. She picked some enormous specimens for us, and showed us a new flower which the Crown Prince brought her from Hamburg, *Lilium giganteum*, a native of the Himalayas, a tall, fantastic-looking stem, with fresh green leaves and bell-shaped white lilies with a mauve calyx. She picked one of these for me in the sweetest way. Meanwhile she showed us all the little beds and plantations, which she knows so much about that it is surprising. A professional gardener could not go to work more thoroughly. And all the time she is as gay, bright

\* ‘ Life, Letters and Journals of Sir Charles Lyell.’ London : Murray.

† ‘ Gustav zu Putlitz,’ vol. ii., p. 87 *et seq.*

‡ The Crown Prince.

and smiling as a child. Yet a few moments afterwards she is immersed in a deep and learned conversation, expressing the soundest and most important opinions. She said to Gustav :

“I spoke the other day to the President of the Ministry about the performance of your piece ‘For the Crown.’ The King told me that Hülsen\* must submit it to the Minister for approval, and I told him that with all his business he had no time for reading, but that I had read it, and it was very good and interesting ; he ought to have it performed.”

‘Then she talked about Prince William, and how much she wished to have him educated later on with other boys of his age away from home. She also told us about her reading, and that only lately she had read the conversations of Goethe and Eckermann, and the correspondence with Frau von Stein. Her criticisms were so sound and clever that Gustav was delighted.’

‘ *June 21.*

‘We dined at two o’clock, and then came the royal children, who are simply charming—so bright and lively ; Prince Sigismund is really a delightful child. The Princess then took me into her room, and while she painted one of the beautiful lilies which she gave me, I had a long talk with her. I know no one who has such a fascinating way of speaking ; it is a real pleasure to listen to her and to experience the charm of her peculiar personality. The Crown Princess is always dressed very simply, but perfectly, and looks wonderfully nice with her beautiful expressive eyes.

\* Director of the Royal Theatre, Berlin.

There is an indescribable charm about her whole person.'

' June 22.

'Yesterday the Princess sang me her favourite songs most delightfully: Scottish ballads, English hymns, and a very fine Christmas hymn composed by Prince Albert. Her characteristic style and delicate feeling showed me that she is thoroughly musical. In the intervals she told me all about her home, in a charming way complained of her frequent separations from the Crown Prince, talked about her songs and some very pretty albums which she let me see. All relics and souvenirs of her father are preserved with touching love and devotion. She hardly ever mentions him without tears; his death affected her very deeply.'

' June 23.

'A letter came from the Crown Prince, the first page of which the Crown Princess gave Gustav to read; the Crown Prince wrote how glad he was to hear that we were with the Princess, and sent us messages. The Crown Princess feels the Prince's absence very much, and is often quite melancholy.'

' June 25.

'How often I wish you were here now, so that you might enjoy all the treasures which the Crown Princess shows me! Her books, collections of engravings, albums and pictures, are all arranged with such artistic feeling, and everything about the Crown Princess is so simple and natural; she never makes



use of stock phrases, and that has an especial charm. She is looking particularly well at this moment.'

'June 26.

'Yesterday after tea we spent a very pleasant evening; the Princess gave us a most interesting account of the English drama, and quoted a great deal from Shakespeare, whom she seems to know half by heart. She declares that she speaks English with a German accent, but to me it sounds very soft and *sympathique*.

'In the morning Gustav read the Princess the "Address to my People," which she did not know, and which pleased her very much. She has a decided opinion about everything brought to her notice. Then she fulfilled an old promise by reading us some extracts from Shakespeare, a family edition which her father gave her. Gustav was quite delighted with her delivery, her quick intelligence and sympathetic expression.'

For change of air in the summer the Crown Prince and family spent several weeks at the watering-place of Wyck, on the island of Föhr. The following correspondence refers to their visit:

'Anyone who did not know that the Crown Prince and his family were staying here would scarcely guess that such exalted personages are among our visitors, they behave so simply and unassumingly. The royal couple go on shopping expeditions in the little town. The afternoons are generally employed in excursions to the neighbouring villages of the island, and the Princess frequently visits the neat, pretty houses,

where she is evidently pleased, it is said, at the universal Frisian cleanliness and neatness. The steam yacht *Grille*, riding at anchor in the roadstead of Wyck, often carries the royal couple to the small islands (Halligen) close at hand. They lately undertook a somewhat longer trip of two days to the coast of Norway, where they landed for a mountain drive.'

From Wyck the Crown Prince paid a visit to the large camp of exercise of the Schleswig garrison troops on the Lockstedt Heath. After meeting his consort at Flensburg, the Crown Prince accompanied her to the heights of Düppel, to view the redoubts and earthworks and the graves of the fallen. On the memorial to the fallen Prussians the Crown Princess laid a large wreath of wild-flowers, which she had herself picked and arranged on her way through the fields where the earthworks stood, and which she had adorned with a blue silk scarf she was wearing. From Düppel the royal pair went to Satrup and Nübel, visiting the graves of the fallen, and drove over the spot where in the preceding year the Crown Prince had received his baptism of fire.

In the ecclesiastical questions of 1864 and 1865 the Crown Prince took up a very decided position. In the autumn of 1864 Duncker had won the thanks of the Crown Prince by a memorandum on the subject of the proceedings at the episcopal elections for Trèves and Cologne, setting forth the legitimate claims of the State. The Crown Prince used all his influence to prevent the rights of the State from suffering by the election of men of Ultramontane tendencies, who were brought forward by means of a system of proposal lists, introduced by Rome in spite of former

engagements on the subject. In opposing the list system, he addressed the King, and even Bismarck, representing the dangers of Jesuitism, and complaining of the lukewarmness of Mühler, the Minister for Public Instruction, and of Bismarck's disinclination to go thoroughly into the matter. Duncker was entrusted with negotiations with the Minister for Public Instruction; information regarding the personages proposed was exchanged between them, and Duncker effected the cancelling of the candidature of von Ketteler by means of a character-sketch. However, the earnest efforts of the Crown Prince in this matter did not lead to any encouraging results. Nevertheless, the Prince did not hesitate to advise the abolition of the Catholic section of the Public Instruction Office in an autograph memorandum to the King in November, 1865.

The Crown Prince at this time also endeavoured to strengthen the German element in the formerly Polish provinces, by means of the purchase of Polish estates and the settling of German farmers. In this connection also Duncker was commissioned to correspond with the Royal House Minister and with the President of Posen.

In the late autumn of 1865 (from the end of October till the beginning of December), the Crown Prince and family paid another visit to the English Court.

## CHAPTER X

### THE SETTLEMENT OF THE ELBE DUCHIES

1865—1866

By the Peace of Vienna the government of the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein passed under the joint control of Prussia and Austria, thereby creating a political situation which was bound to lead to a conflict, owing to the ancient rivalry of the two great German Powers. The administration of the Duchies was placed in the hands of Prussian and Austrian Commissioners, and the Federal execution troops were withdrawn from Holstein. In this way the Diet was deprived of the power of taking active measures for the investiture of the Hereditary Prince of Augustenburg. Austria was convinced that it was useless to demand a cession of territory, such as a portion of Silesia, from her ally in return for her consent to the annexation of the Duchies by Prussia, and therefore urged that Prince Frederick should be placed at the head of the Duchies, if only provisionally. Bismarck declined the Austrian proposal on the ground that an act of this nature would forestall the claims of other pretenders. He observed that Prussia

could certainly not annex the Duchies without Austrian consent, although this step would be in the highest degree conducive to Prussian interests without being opposed to those of Austria. Prussia's geographical position bound her particularly to insure the Duchies against any return to a state of anarchy. By this declaration the Prussian statesman voluntarily disclosed the aim of his policy. His plan as yet found no support in the public opinion of Germany, which still clung, as before, to the candidature of the Prince of Augustenburg. The idea of annexation, however, had naturally gained ground in the Prussian army, for had not the occupation of the Duchies been achieved with its blood?

The Crown Prince, with laudable consistency, still championed the hereditary rights of Prince Frederick. The pursuit of a policy of conquest by such devious paths as those of annexation was an enterprise which his straightforward nature was unable to approve. Aspirations of this kind found no response in him. He regarded the Prussian territory as already sufficiently extended, and he was troubled to think that the army should be in favour of annexation.

After the Crown lawyers had been called upon for a legal opinion upon the hereditary rights of the different claimants, the conditions upon which Prussia was prepared to receive the Prince of Augustenburg were communicated to the Cabinet of Vienna on February 22, 1865. The demands went much farther than those which the Hereditary Prince had endeavoured to arrange in June, 1864. He expressed his objections to Prussia's military demands in a letter dated March 29, suggested by the Crown Prince, to

whom it was addressed, though intended for the King's perusal.

The Crown Prince highly approved of the letter, and informed the Hereditary Prince on April 6 that the King had expressed himself to the following effect :

‘ On the whole the contents are good, but in regard to the military question the same difficulties are being raised as in other countries. Our intention is to unite the future troops of the Duchies firmly with ourselves (Prussia), in order that, should a precarious situation arise, we may not be deprived of a direct influence upon the troops by means of a Convention liable to be overthrown at any moment. The Convention of Coburg can be annulled at any time. It has been proposed by Baden and another Federal State that the Convention with the Duchies should be made for forty years only ; but if the period is to be as long as that, a complete union with Prussia would not be very different. I shall have to consult with Bismarck as regards answering the letter.’

The counter-proposals which Ahlefeldt was commissioned by the Hereditary Prince Frederick to offer on the subject of the February conditions (April 5, 1865) met with an emphatic rejection by Bismarck. He remarked that an unfavourable light had been thrown upon the Prince's cause by the fact that Austria, Bavaria, Saxony, and Hesse-Darmstadt had in the meantime brought the subject before the Diet. Although the Prince might have had nothing to do with this action, he was still the cause of dispute, and the union of Germany was endangered by him. Prussia would now not only put

forward her own claims, but also dispute the claims of the Prince to Schleswig and considerable portions of Holstein, and, furthermore, would lay stress upon the formal renunciation of Duke Christian Augustus, which he—Bismarck—had himself effected.

The joint administration of the Duchies by Prussia and Austria entailed constant friction. The two Powers assumed an increasingly hostile attitude in Schleswig-Holstein, while the answers from Vienna to Prussian complaints became more and more unsatisfactory, until at last a separation was imminent. On May 29, 1865, the King summoned a Council of State, at which the Crown Prince and Moltke were present. On this occasion Bismarck declared the annexation of the Duchies to be desirable, and remarked that it could only be achieved by means of a war which was in any case unavoidable sooner or later. 'We cannot advise His Majesty to follow this course; the decision can only proceed from his own royal conviction. Should he take such a determination, the entire Prussian nation would joyfully follow him.'

The majority of the Ministers announced their concurrence with Bismarck's representations. The Crown Prince alone actively opposed them, declaring that war with Austria would mutilate Germany and produce foreign intervention, and protesting at the same time that the Prince of Augustenburg was a true Prussian. This statement was contradicted by Count Eulenburg, while Bismarck replied that an Austrian war could not be considered as a civil war, since Austria had always desired a French alliance, and would accept one at any moment if France was agreeable to it.



Before the King closed the meeting, he asked Moltke: 'What is the opinion of the army?'

'My personal view,' replied Moltke, 'is that annexation is the only satisfactory solution for Prussia and Schleswig-Holstein. The gain is so great that it is well worth a war. The army is also in favour of annexation. I think that we shall probably be successful, and we can bring superiority of numbers to bear at the decisive point.'

The King reserved his decision.

It is clear that to the Crown Prince's mind the Schleswig-Holstein affair had become chiefly a question of the Hereditary Prince. He regarded the recognition and investiture of Prince Frederick as the best means of peaceably accommodating the political differences between the two great German Powers. As a decision was imminent, Duncker renewed his attempts to influence the Crown Prince's views. The importance of the Prince's attitude, having regard to his position in the army and the State, made it imperative for Duncker not to neglect to lay the question once more before him with all the arguments at his command.

The Crown Prince started with the assumption that at that time, but not afterwards, voluntary union was the only means of forming a new German Federal State. The conditions of union with Prussia entered upon by the Elbe Duchies would be a model for the whole future Federal State. Duncker's arguments contested this view.

About this time King William first acknowledged to his son that since the events at Düppel and Alsen he was no longer so averse to the idea of annexation; in

fact, his inclination to that course was now stronger than before.

In a letter dated June 1, 1865, King William reproached Prince Frederick with having entered the Duchies against his advice, surrounding himself with a regular Government, and making common cause with the enemies of Prussia. It would be well for the Prince to consider how far his present position was consistent with his duty as a Prussian subject and a Prussian officer. By virtue of the Peace of Vienna, the monarchs of Prussia and Austria were the only rightful Sovereigns of the Duchies. To set up another Government without their consent was a criminal act of rebellion. The moment would come when he, the King, would be bound to employ his power and authority in defence of his rights. In conclusion, the King called upon the Prince to quit Schleswig-Holstein during the convocation of the Estates.

On July 2 the *Preussische Staatsanzeiger* published Bismarck's account of his interview with the Hereditary Prince the day before. As the Crown Prince had conveyed to the latter the invitation to Berlin, and thus guaranteed discretion in the matter, especially with regard to confidential utterances on the part of the Hereditary Prince, this disclosure was at the same time a blow aimed at the Crown Prince. Although Prince Frederick considered Bismarck's account inaccurate, he resolved to keep silence, in order not to provoke further steps from the Prussian Government. The Crown Prince approved of this attitude and wrote on July 9 :

‘Bismarck's publication of his conversation with you was certainly designed to do you material injury.

This measure has, however, exactly the contrary effect, as people approve of your appeal to the country, and understand that a three hours' interview does not pass without moments of excitement; the connection of the whole affair is also important, and the one-sided account from one party cannot be received as a statement of what really took place. To me it appears judicious on your part not to have immediately issued your own account of the interview, as a weapon of that kind may be of still more value in the future.'

Unfortunately, there now appeared an increasing tendency on the part of the Augustenburg party to use the Crown Prince as a tool for their own ends. One of their newspapers reported that a personage very near the throne of Prussia had declared Bismarck's account of his past conversation with the Hereditary Prince to be incorrect, denouncing as a 'pure invention' the Prince's reported remark that he had not appealed to the Prussians. This induced Max Duncker to wrestle once more with the Crown Prince's prejudice against Bismarck's course of action. The Crown Prince himself gave him an opportunity of referring to this publication of Bismarck's, and of disposing of the assertion that the Minister had been guilty of misrepresentation of the facts. Duncker furthermore pointed out the decline of public sympathy with the Augustenburger, which was apparent even amongst the Opposition in the Prussian Lower Chamber. He explained to him how far Austria was from being in a position to make an independent agreement with the Prince of Augustenburg, seeing that she had but lately failed in her domestic policy, had laid down her arms in Italy, and was in strained relations with

France. He was thankful to receive a promise from the Crown Prince that he would refrain from any kind of demonstration on his journey from Wyck to the island of Föhr.

In July, 1865—the Prussian Crown lawyers had in the meanwhile given their judgment against Prince Frederick, whose candidature thus seemed at an end as far as Prussia was concerned—the most disquieting rumours of an imminent breach with Austria reached Berlin from Karlsbad, where the King was staying with Bismarck.

In this critical situation, Duncker wrote to the Crown Prince on July 14 :

‘The delicate and difficult position in which your Royal Highness is placed renders it imperative for me to suppress nothing. An overwhelming majority in Prussia not only desires the realization of the demands of February 22, but also annexation. The army is unanimous in this wish ; they want to have fought for Prussia, not for Duke Frederick. In the last few weeks I have repeatedly met with the opinion that the resistance offered to the Prussian demands by the population of Schleswig-Holstein arose from a report spread from Kiel that your Royal Highness would oppose and hinder not only the annexation, but also any material restriction of the Duke’s sovereignty. At Kiel they rely not so much upon Austria as upon your Royal Highness to stir up the country against Prussia. Your Royal Highness has stronger duties towards Prussia than towards Duke Frederick. It is the fate of Princes to be obliged to serve the interests of their State, and not to follow their personal inclinations. It is the fate of Princes to be forbidden to be

magnanimous where the interests of their State are at stake. The question is how to preserve the Government from conceiving prejudices and impressions which may last all the longer because the Schleswig-Holstein question is not merely a question of the day and of ephemeral feeling, but closely involves the interests of Prussia's existence; nay, it not only involves, but determines, the future of Prussia and Germany.'

Duncker concluded by remarking that the Prince had every right to 'an attitude of complete reserve, for your Royal Highness knows yourself to be free from any share in Bismarck's tortuous plans, and equally free from any participation in the fatal resolutions of the policy at Kiel.'

In two further reports of July 18 and 20, 1865, Duncker reiterated the same aspect of the case, the same requests and warnings, insinuating that the Duke's renunciation of his rights in consideration of an indemnity would be the most desirable solution, and lastly hinting that even in the Royal Family the Crown Prince's attitude towards the problem of the Duchies might be employed in a certain quarter to injure him.

It is certain that friendship for the Hereditary Prince Frederick was a motive for the position assumed by the Crown Prince in the Schleswig-Holstein question; but it is equally certain that he was also moved by greater, more essential, and more general considerations. These motives originated in the decided political conceptions and habits of thought in which the Crown Prince had become more and more confirmed. A man less liberally minded by nature would not have allowed himself to be so persistently addressed and lectured; but the even temper of the Crown Prince

prevented his regarding mere difference of opinion as affording grounds for displeasure or a rupture. He prized Duncker's frankness and the honesty of his views, since he understood his standpoint, but—he too had made his decision. Though he was obliged to refrain from offering open opposition to Bismarck's policy, he expressed his opinion to the King and Bismarck in a letter addressed to Regensburg, where a Cabinet Council\* was held on the question of the war, on July 21, 1865. His answer to Duncker clearly shows the gist of his views. He reasoned as follows :

‘If it was desired to settle the affairs of the Duchies immediately after our victories, an agreement might have been made with Duke Frederick, the vital question for Prussia confidentially adjusted with him, and his candidature then supported. But the plan was to ruin him. So matters were allowed to drag on until Austria, according to her old custom, interested herself in an anti-Prussian enterprise, and tried to lay pitfalls for us everywhere in a country under our joint control. These are the fruits of an alliance with our natural antagonist.

‘Under the circumstances, apart from my well-known reasons for the investiture of Duke Frederick, I can only conceive the possibility of Austria's consenting to the annexation of the Elbe Duchies by Prussia after a successful war between us and the Imperial State. Compensation in the form of payment of the expenses of the war by Prussia would be an impossibility in view of the Emperor's disposition. His counsellors would agree to this sooner than he

\* On the King's journey to Gastein the Ministers met by appointment at Regensburg.



himself. However, in this case, Prussia would be purchasing the Duchies, and would not really acquire an iota of right to their possession.

‘You consider that I ought to influence Duke Frederick to accept the conditions of February 22.

‘But do you believe that he is so dependent upon my advice? Would he not, on the contrary, allow himself to be deported out of the country under military arrest rather than yield, persuaded as he is of the justice of his claims, and supported by the majority of his adherents? And how shall I now prevail on him to consent to those conditions, after Bismarck’s remark to me on June 18 that they were drawn up so as to be impossible for Duke Frederick to accept them?

‘A conflict is desired, in order to adjust our present incurable internal dissensions. That is tolerably clear. And even if Duke Frederick were to yield, and were he to accept even more onerous conditions, we should still manage matters so that new complications might arise in order to obtain war.

‘My position is, and remains, a passive one; my views are known to the King and Bismarck, and I have expressed them yet again by letter. Nobody knows better than I do that my opinions are of no weight; but I was bound at least to show that I did not regard the projected conflict as unavoidable.

‘Only remember that my arguments are not prompted merely by my friendship with Duke Frederick, but above all by my love for my country, and by the conviction that the welfare and prosperity of Prussia will not be advanced by continuing the present course of action.’



Once more, though only temporarily, was the danger of war between Austria and Prussia averted by means of the Convention of Gastein (August 14, 1865). Without abandoning the joint right of possession of the two Duchies, enjoyed by both Powers, an agreement was made by which the administration of Schleswig was placed in the hands of Prussia, to whom, moreover, important privileges were also granted in Holstein. The administration of Holstein itself fell to the hands of Austria, while Lauenburg was ceded absolutely to Prussia for a money consideration. This was a curious expedient, but also plainly another step on the way towards annexation, and a heavy blow to the Augustenburg agitation, which Austria could no longer support in the present state of affairs.

A noticeable feature was the secrecy with which Bismarck carried out the plan submitted to him by the Austrian Ambassador, Count Blome, at Munich. In a special report dated Gastein, August 1, 1865, Bismarck besought the King to keep the whole project absolutely secret from the Crown Prince, because he anticipated the storm that would be raised by the Augustenburg party after the publication of the Convention, since they would regard it as the beginning of the final division, and would not doubt that the territories coming under exclusively Prussian rule would be lost to Augustenburg. The following passage of Bismarck's report is highly characteristic :

'If, trusting to ties of relationship, a hint from Coblenz should reach Queen Victoria, the Crown Prince and Princess, Weimar or Baden, the fact that we had not kept the secret, as I promised Count Blome at his

request, would arouse the mistrust of the Emperor Francis Joseph and bring failure upon the negotiation. But behind this failure there inevitably lies a war with Austria.' Thus, Bismarck went as far as to threaten the King with war, in order to obtain his silence on the subject of the treaty, which, after all, he only regarded as 'patching up the rents in the building.'

The above special report is a remarkable proof of the degree to which the Crown Prince was shut out of the policy of the time. He first heard of the Convention on meeting the Hereditary Prince Frederick at Hamburg on his return journey from Föhr, on the evening of August 17, 1865. 'He was stupefied at the news of the partition,' the Hereditary Prince wrote to Samwer. It was no wonder that his aversion to Bismarck's procedure increased still more, when he learned with what care the threads of his policy had been concealed from him. His mind was filled with gloomy reflections. He foresaw the first indications of a revolution that would assail the monarchic principle of the existing system of government, and Duncker had some difficulty in convincing him, by a detailed account of the circumstances of the administration, the exchequer, the army, and the economical situation of the nation, that the State, although diseased in a single spot, was otherwise entirely sound. It was therefore not surprising that a speech made by President Grabow at the opening of the Landtag on January 15, 1866, gained the approbation of the Crown Prince, as it drew the gloomiest picture of the situation of Prussia, without a word of acknowledgment of the success of the Cabinet in

foreign affairs. On the other hand, he was indignant at the decision of the High Court of Justice, given under questionable circumstances, against the right of members of the Chamber to free speech. The Crown Prince ascribed the judgment to the direct influence of the Minister of Justice, exercised with the intention of undermining the Constitution.

The sudden dismissal of the Lower Chamber on February 23, 1866, became necessary by reason of the absolute futility of their transactions in view of the dangerously strained relations between Prussia and Austria. The Crown Prince saw nothing but light-headed rashness in Bismarck's measures, and thought that his intention was to produce a great confusion, perhaps even a European revolution, because he could not maintain his footing otherwise. He desired war in order to rid himself of internal difficulties ; this was unprincipled trifling with the fate of Prussia. He would not scruple to make use of revolutionary expedients in the case of intervention on the part of France. The King also desired war, but not revolution ; however, the omnipotent Minister led the King as he pleased. He, the Crown Prince, was not afraid of a just war, a war of defence ; but now the question was simply to gain possession of the Duchies at any cost ; to ruin the Hereditary Prince had been Bismarck's idea from the first ; the February conditions had only been offered in order to be rejected. In the Crown Prince's opinion, there had been a way by which war might have been avoided ; a secret agreement might have been made with the Hereditary Prince, and carried out after the withdrawal of the Austrians. The war with Austria would be a

fratricidal war. He was well aware that Prussia had gained her position under Frederick the Great through war with Austria, but the time had long gone by for such a course of action. The chances of the war seemed also unfavourable to him. His chief anxiety was on the subject of the expected intervention of France, who would prevent the Italians from siding with Prussia, and he also dreaded the possibility of having to cede territory to Austria.

In reply to all these objections, Duncker maintained that Bismarck did not prosecute a policy of principle, but of interest — of Prussian and German, and therefore also of Hohenzollern, interests; that the moment was incomparably favourable for war, as Austria was in difficulties with Hungary, and in want of money, which Louis Napoleon could not remedy, even if he were to come to the assistance of the Austrians. The war precluded the possibility of cession of territory, and on the other hand could only be avoided by the sacrifice of Prussia's power and prestige.

Duncker's arguments failed to convince the Crown Prince; he continued to oppose the idea of war, and gave his vote against it in the Council held on February 28, 1866.

The political horizon now grew darker day by day, and sharper notes continued to be exchanged between Austria and Prussia on the subject of the Augustenburg agitation. Austria began to arm, and on March 16 announced her intention to the German Governments of submitting the decision with regard to Schleswig-Holstein to the Diet, and of demanding the mobilization of the Federal army against Prussia. Thereupon Bismarck, to the surprise of everyone, proposed

the convocation of a German Parliament by universal suffrage.

It is a striking fact that the Crown Prince paid no heed to the change of ideas which many strongly Liberal politicians experienced in judging the political situation ; among these were the Prince of Hohenzollern, the Chief Burgomaster Seydel, and Theodor von Bernhardi. The latter had an audience with the Crown Prince on March 3, which he thus describes in his diary :

‘ Our conversation, which lasted an hour and a half, has left with me a very unsatisfactory and almost uncomfortable impression.

‘ The Crown Prince began by inquiring what I could tell him with regard to the feeling of the country. I replied : “ There is certainly great excitement in the country, but as matters stand at present I do not consider it alarming. There is no fear of revolutionary agitations. It is neither possible nor desirable that the present system of home government should continue for an indefinite period ; sooner or later a change must be made—the longer it is postponed the more difficult the change will be, and the more dangerous may it become under certain conditions.”

‘ The Crown Prince replied to this remark by the eager rejoinder : “ Ah, why do they push matters to a head ! ” speaking as though Bismarck had brought about this critical situation, and as if, driven to despair by the Parliamentary conflict, he urged for annexation and even breach with Austria, with the indistinct idea of maintaining his position by playing a dangerous game and increasing the general confusion.

“ I am far from approving of Bismarck’s policy in

every respect," I replied, "nor can I defend it upon every point; but such looking backward is useless, as we must confess even when we lament the fact; it does not help us now to say how much better everything might have been arranged. Mankind has no power over the past. In general life, and more especially in politics, we always have to accept the past as over and done with, and to deal with matters as they are at the actual moment."

'The Crown Prince agreed to this, but continued in the same strain, even asserting that Bismarck had entered upon this course of policy merely through dislike of the House of Augustenburg and the Liberal party, which was disposed to support that House. There is some truth in the statement that he was unwilling to enter upon the matter because it was the affair of the Liberal party, but it is equally true that he was prepared to come to an arrangement with the House of Augustenburg upon certain conditions. The Crown Prince maintained exactly the contrary, declaring that the Hereditary Prince had always been perfectly correct in his behaviour, and was always ready to concede all reasonable advantages to Prussia.

'I thereupon related a whole series of negotiations which clearly showed this not to have been the case. The Crown Prince listened with much attention, as these details were of great interest to him, especially with reference to the policy of Bavaria, which he believed capable of anything; but he appeared not to notice the real point of my remarks. In his opinion the Augustenburg policy was not affected in the least by what I had said. It was in vain that I added—with all the precaution which Max Duncker had

impressed upon me to use—that the Hereditary Prince had fallen into the common error of counting too much upon the enthusiasm of the German nation, and believing that no other support was needed. The Crown Prince paid no attention. He insisted repeatedly upon the “loyal Prussian heart” of the Augustenburger, and asserted that he would have agreed to anything that Prussia could demand; “but, of course, if conditions are made with the intention of forcing a refusal”—the Crown Prince broke off and looked straight in front of him.

‘(N.B.—That certainly happened, but only quite at the last, when all hope was abandoned of coming to an understanding with the Augustenburger.)’

‘*The Crown Prince*: “Bismarck has contrived to get the King completely into his power; how he has managed this I do not know, but it is the fact; the King sees everything only with Bismarck’s eyes. And so we are making straight for annexation, and we shall carry it out, for the King wishes it. Manteuffel told me before he went away: ‘The annexation must take place, for the army and the nation desire it.’”

‘*I*: “Although General Manteuffel says so, there is some truth in it. The feeling in the provinces is decidedly in favour of annexation.”

‘*The Crown Prince*: “Really?”

‘*I*: “Yes, your Royal Highness. What surprised me most is that the Rhinelanders are urgent for annexation. In general the feeling of the country is so strong that it would be looked upon as a defeat of Prussia, and would cause great discontent and vexation, if the annexation did not take place. If your Royal Highness will allow me to speak quite openly—



as a loyal subject I owe you the whole truth—the feeling of the country is so strong that, outside the little circle that your Royal Highness can trust implicitly, it must not be known that the Crown Prince of Prussia is against annexation.”

‘*The Crown Prince*: “Oh, that is a matter of indifference to me! I have known that for a long time. I have already heard some very unpleasant remarks, but I shall take no notice of them, even were any violent step to be taken against me.”

‘He continued to speak against the annexation, implying that it would be the ruin of German aspirations. “This matter ought to have been set up as a standard for the relations between the separate States and Prussia as the ruling Power; the Middle States are well aware that this will be an example of the way in which they would all be mutilated.” Here the Prince made a gesture with his fingers as of a pair of scissors cutting downwards. “And in order that this may not take place, and to prevent such an example being given, the Middle States wish Prussia to annex the Elbe Duchies!” The Crown Prince then spoke of the chances of the war, which I could not believe to be unfavourable.

‘*I*: “The Austrians are not in a very good position, and Russia will not interfere in the matter—at any rate, not in favour of Austria. It is a point against the latter that Italy will of course not remain quiet, and France will be neutral: for Napoleon cannot possibly fight for Austria against Italy, for the sake of maintaining Austria in possession of Venice.”

‘*The Crown Prince*: “Well, yes! So France will remain neutral! But after the first few engagements

Napoleon will offer his mediation ; it will be declined. He will offer it again and again—at last peremptorily—will perhaps dictate the terms of peace as he wishes them to be, and will certainly say : ‘ You shall have the Duchies, but give me Belgium ! ’ ”

‘ I admitted that there was no doubt as to Napoleon’s desire for Belgium, and that possibly a secret partition treaty had already been made with Holland.

‘ The dinner-hour had now arrived, and the Crown Prince’s carriage was announced. He dismissed me with the words that during the next week much that was of importance would take place, and that he would then like to have another conversation with me.’

In the approaching conflict with the Austrian Government, the Crown Prince nearly succeeded in effecting a settlement. The following account is taken from the diplomatic reminiscences of Lord Augustus Loftus, the British Ambassador of the time :\*

At a *soirée* given by Count von Bismarck (in the middle of March, 1866), at which Their Majesties and suite were present, Lord Augustus Loftus assured the King of the willingness of the British Government to use their good offices on behalf of a peaceable arrangement of the differences between Prussia and Austria. The King was not averse to this proposal, and on the following day asked the Crown Prince to submit the matter to Queen Victoria, and ask Her Majesty to undertake the mediation. The Crown Prince gladly and readily assented. The project, however, fell

\* ‘ The Diplomatic Reminiscences of Lord Augustus Loftus, 1862-1879,’ vol. i., p. 46. London.

through, by reason of the refusal of Count Bismarck, who, when interrogated by Lord Augustus Loftus on the subject, merely replied that the Government of Great Britain should address themselves to Vienna, for Austria was the party who threatened to be the disturber of the peace.

In a work by E. Tempeltey, entitled 'Duke Ernest of Coburg and the Year 1866,' published in 1898, two letters are given, which King William and the Crown Prince wrote to Duke Ernest by chance on the same day (March 26, 1866). These letters are striking examples of the antagonism between the views of father and son with regard to the existing political situation, and the duty it imposed upon Prussia.

The King's letter to the Duke ran as follows :

'Many thanks for your kind wishes for the 22nd. Certainly I cannot be sufficiently grateful to Heaven for preserving my mental and bodily powers, and not making me an object of public derision, now that I have been permitted to attain this advanced age! But how long I may still be so preserved is known to Heaven alone.

'You are very right in observing that the new year I have now entered upon is presenting itself under somewhat gloomy auspices. Everything in my power will be done to maintain peace, as long as is compatible with the honour of my country. But if Austria does not cease to attack my honour in the most insulting manner, not only in the Duchies, but in all Europe, and even farther . . . in order to render Prussia everywhere detestable, then my patience is at an end. Gastein was the result of the feeling that an

end must be made of Halbhuber's\* misrule, if we are to exist peaceably side by side in the Duchies. But scarcely had two months passed, when the misrule broke out again in a higher and ever increasing degree. My well-founded remonstrances in January were rejected in the most insulting manner on February 7. Since then the newspapers on both sides employ terms of the greatest acrimony. For the last fortnight Austria has been arming and concentrating bodies of troops on the Silesian frontier, and yet until now I have not moved a single man, which is sufficient proof that I am not the aggressive party. The future union of the Duchies was again stipulated at Gastein. But it is unfair and unjust to employ the intervening time to rob me of all sympathy by means of insult and invective. If Austria desires war, I shall not seek to avoid it. All dangers connected with it I look upon just as you do. Whoever is on my side will never have anything to fear from Prussia, in spite of the fifty-year-old nightmare that Prussia's three Kings are only aiming at annexing their German neighbours. Even although a reform of the Confederation with regard to North Germany appears necessary, this cannot be termed annexation, and you have set the example by taking the first step in the matter. Just as at Baden† I stood at your head, united with you all, so I still stand to-day, should Austria's rivalry end in the friendly recognition of Prussia as an equal Power. This I believed to have attained in 1864 after

\* Baron Halbhuber was the former Austrian Civil Commissioner in the Duchies.

† At Baden-Baden, at the time of the meeting with the Emperor Napoleon III. in June, 1860.

the conclusion of peace, but the eighteen months that have since elapsed prove that it is not so. If this had been the case you would all be at our back. Why were you not in the same position when Prussia and Austria stood together in 1864? The supposititious rights of the Augustenburger caused many of you to become our opponents. These rights can only possibly apply to certain portions of land, not to the whole of the Duchies; the judgment of my Crown lawyers is decisive in my eyes. On the same side are ranged public opinion and the desire of my people, who regard the annexation of the Duchies as a reparation for the sacrifice of life and property. The King of Prussia must reckon with these. The interests of Prussia and Germany are identical if the former is in possession of those territories. Why, therefore, should there be war?

‘There you have in a few words my confession of faith in the political situation of the moment. God will manifest His will in the future.

‘Your devoted friend and cousin,

‘WILLIAM.’

The Crown Prince wrote on the same day (March 26, 1866):

‘MY DEAR UNCLE,

‘Thanks for your letter; I am writing by Schleinitz to tell you in general terms that I am in great trouble at the present time.

‘Fratricidal is the expression I employ to designate Bismarck’s resolve of forcing a war with Austria upon us. Things are not yet at their worst. . . .

‘The King is certainly not in favour of war, but rather is fully sensible of the tremendous responsibility he incurs by entering upon a war of this kind. Yet he is irritated by Austria’s attitude in the Holstein business, and also by the press . . . and now that troops are moving in Bohemia and Galicia, this circumstance will act as fuel to the flame. . . .

‘I cannot understand B.’s temerity in undertaking a German war on German soil against the sympathies of the narrower and also the wider Fatherland, since nothing in the world would be more welcome to the Emperor Napoleon than the certain prospect of acting as mediator in Germany.

‘But here they rely on the favourable situation of the moment. (?) . . .

‘But if we are not immediately victorious, if our neighbours declare against us—what then? It is a terrible prospect, which is just as possible as the success which here they are so confidently counting upon.

‘We are surrendering ourselves bound hand and foot to a blind fate. I for my part shall leave no means untried to meet, to avert, to warn, to obviate the mischief. But you know how little power I have. . . .

‘Ever, my dear uncle,

‘Your faithful and devoted nephew and friend,

‘FREDERICK WILLIAM.’

In this time of anxiety a second daughter was born to the Crown Prince and Princess, and received the name of Victoria.

The wish to win the Crown Prince over to his

side in the great conflict just commencing caused Bismarck to acquaint Duncker, in a private conversation, with his plans. The following day the latter explained to the Crown Prince the importance of the reform of the Bund and Bismarck's general train of ideas. Although the alliance with Italy, the Parliament and the German Federal State were in accordance with the general tendency of the Crown Prince's views, they lost all value in his eyes by reason of their being stamped with Bismarck's image. He believed that the Minister would never succeed in inducing the King to carry out such audacious projects. The Parliamentary plan without hard and fast rules was regarded by the Crown Prince as immature, and the whole affair as 'a criminal trifling with sacred things.' He thought that because Bismarck was in difficulties he made propositions in ignorance of their true significance and tendency. With his own programme for the future ready in his mind, the Crown Prince condemned the programme proposed by the statesman at the head of affairs. He insisted that only by 'a definitely Liberal system of government, conforming to the requirements of the time,' could the supremacy of Prussia be established in Germany. He expressly indicated this as the task that he had set himself, unless Bismarck cut the ground from under his feet. His aim was to establish the German Confederation with the help of the people on a Liberal basis, employing force, if necessary, against the resisting Princes. Herr von Roggenbach, the Minister for Baden, who had laboured so long and earnestly for the Augustenburg cause, made decidedly more impression upon the Crown Prince than Duncker had done. He was in



Berlin from April 25 to May 2 in obedience to a summons from Bismarck, and he endeavoured to influence the Crown Prince by a defence of the existing policy of Prussia.

Theodor von Bernhardi writes in his diary on April 30, 1866 :

‘Went to see Duncker. He told me that it was Bismarck’s own idea that Roggenbach should enter the service of Prussia, and he even proposed to him to do so. But Roggenbach declined, as he feared by this step to lose at least some of his influence upon the Liberal party outside Prussia. He said he was “a far more useful ally” to Prussia in an independent position than if he were in her service. (N.B.—He is probably right.) Roggenbach also had a long audience of the Crown Prince, and discussed the present situation from our own point of view—referring to the annexation of the Elbe Duchies as the most desirable solution under any conditions, and now an absolute necessity ; declaring the war to be inevitable, and expressing his conviction that on that very account Bismarck must now be supported and maintained in power. The Crown Prince listened to all this in silence.’

Facts had more effect upon the Crown Prince than all this well-meant advice. The approaching war appealed to his military instinct. His country was in danger, and the responsible task fell to him of defending Silesia at the head of an army against an Austrian invasion. The first change in his views was brought about by the gravity of the situation and the onerous duties devolving upon him.

On May 7, Von Roon, the Minister for War,

remarked to Theodor von Bernhardi : 'One is glad to observe a noticeable change in the views and temper of the Crown Prince. He recently told the officers on parade that he had been wrong in opposing Bismarck's policy, for he now saw that the war was unavoidable, etc. He evidently wishes his remarks to be made public.'

On the same day Karl Cohen, a stepson of Karl Blind, the well-known Baden exile, made an attempt to assassinate Bismarck. Immediately after the deed the Crown Prince visited the Minister President to congratulate him on his escape.

Moved by the grave and urgent representations of Moltke and the other Generals, who, in allusion to Austria's warlike preparations, declared that they must decline all responsibility for the safety of the State, the King signed a number of orders between May 3 and 12 for the mobilization of the army.

While several corps assembled on both banks of the Elbe and in Lusatia were given the name of the First Army and Elbe Army, under the command of Prince Frederick Charles, a Second Army was formed for the defence of Silesia, and the command of it entrusted to the Crown Prince.

This Second Army originally consisted of the 5th Army Corps (General von Steinmetz) and the 6th Army Corps (General von Mutius), but this was soon supplemented by the 1st Army Corps (General von Bonin) and the Guard Corps under Prince Augustus of Württemberg. A division of cavalry was specially formed from the various regiments of the 5th and 6th Army Corps, under Major-General von Hartmann.

The appointment of the Crown Prince, now General of Infantry, as Commander-in-Chief of the Second Army was dated May 17, while on June 2 he was made Military Governor of the Province of Silesia, with Major-General von Blumenthal as his Chief of Staff.

On May 23 the Crown Prince had a remarkable political conversation with Theodor von Bernhardi, though at this time he was entirely engrossed with preparations for the impending war.

Bernhardi writes as follows :

‘The Crown Prince returned from a drive and received me. After a few words he inquired why, in my opinion, there was going to be war.

‘*I*: “The general view in the country is that we are not making war, but that war is being forced upon us, that Prussia is being attacked and must defend herself, and Herr von Beust is pointed out as the person who has really brought about the war.”

‘The Crown Prince always speaks from the point of view that the war might have been avoided ; he talks of the great danger that the Austrians may only make a show of defending Venice, and—after concluding a “Peace of Villafranca”—proceed to fall upon us with all their troops, aided by the whole of Germany, and even, as he hints, by France.

‘*I*: “As matters stand at present, the probable course of events seems to point to the contrary. Austria persists in her claims ; she will neither give up Venice, her supremacy in Italy, nor the hegemony of Germany. For the present Austria will remain apparently on the defensive in Italy, in order to fall upon us in great force, and after defeating

Prussia, as she hopes, to turn in her full power against Italy."

'The Crown Prince recurs to the idea that the situation is very unfavourable to Prussia.

'I: "A great deal has turned out to be more favourable than could be expected. The Parliamentary session went off very well; we can be quite content with the resolutions which they passed. That is one good result of the presence of Herr von Bunnigsen here at Berlin, as he endeavoured to see how matters really stood."

'*The Crown Prince*: "So he gained confidence here in our affairs?"

'I: "Herr von Bunnigsen saw that matters stand rather differently from what he thought when at a distance."

'The Crown Prince again came back to the fact that the chances are unfavourable for us, and that Prussia has public opinion against her.

'I: "The war appears to me to be an act of madness on the part of Austria. We have a great deal at stake in the war, but Austria is risking her very existence."

'*The Crown Prince* (apparently admitting this in some measure): "We may lose provinces. Well! they can be won back later. If justice were done to the requirements of the time, Prussia would take her natural position at the head of Germany."

'I: "Not without violence even then, your Royal Highness; I do not wish to say that it is not a very fine thing and highly desirable to have public opinion on our side; but the union of Germany is a question of power. Your Royal Highness knows the spirit of

the dynasties as well as I do; the dynasties have great powers of resistance in their organized forces, in their organized armies and finances, and in the system of government, which is their strength; they will certainly not submit without resistance."

'*The Crown Prince*: "The King desires peace; he catches at every straw in order to maintain peace."

'*I*: "It is well known how willing the King is to maintain peace, and how earnest he is in the matter, and there lies a certain danger in the King's very sincerity. The King is always ready to enter sincerely upon negotiations that are started insincerely, and which only have the object of gaining time. Therein lies a great danger."

'*The Crown Prince*: "If justice were done to the requirements of the time, and the Hereditary Prince of Augustenburg were installed in the Elbe Duchies under conditions satisfactory to us, peace would still be possible."

'*I*: "Does your Royal Highness consider that still to be possible?"

'*The Crown Prince*: "Certainly! the Hereditary Prince would immediately accept."'

## CHAPTER XI

### THE CROWN PRINCE IN THE AUSTRIAN WAR\*

1866

‘WHILE commanding a brigade at Cologne, I was pleasantly surprised by a royal Cabinet Order on May 19, 1866, appointing me Chief of the Staff of the Second Army, under the command of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince. Although I had hoped to receive some independent command in the approaching war with Austria, I was nevertheless delighted to enter on such close relations, not merely with a royal Prince, but with a man whom I esteemed so highly and whose acquaintance I had made under unusual circumstances. . . .

‘As Chief of the Crown Prince’s Staff in the two campaigns of 1866 and 1870-71, and enjoying his entire confidence, I have had fuller opportunities than anyone else of recognising and appreciating his qualities as a commander. These qualities have sometimes escaped the notice of those who were not so closely connected with him, though they produced splendid victories. However, I do not intend to dilate further

\* Narrated by Field-Marshal Count von Blumenthal.

on this point, lest I incur the suspicion of being partial and eulogistic. I will content myself with recording a few recollections of the war, from which it is not difficult to draw conclusions.

‘I must, however, mention one characteristic of the Crown Prince, which has probably often been the cause of erroneous judgments concerning him. Outwardly always calm and self-possessed, he was not easily led into hasty decisions; on the contrary, when time permitted, he delighted in talking over situations and viewing them in every possible light. But when he had once made up his mind and issued the necessary instructions, he remained firm, and the attempts of officious persons to persuade him to change his decision were always fruitless. He fully realized that vacillation in a resolution once taken is almost more dangerous than a hasty decision. His kindly disposition prevented him from offering sharp opposition to those who, with the best intentions, gave him their opinions, and he therefore preferred to hold back his own views. Thus, he not infrequently made an impression of being irresolute and vacillating. How little they knew him who thought they could influence him because he seemed undecided and easily convinced! Through this peculiarity of the Crown Prince, the business of the staff was performed with the greatest ease and regularity. The certainty that orders once given would not be altered without the most imperative reasons, and that neither the influence of outsiders nor a predilection for details or individuals could cause any change in them, gave his subordinates a sense of security which cannot be rated too highly. It increased our confidence in our beloved chief, for



whom everyone would have gladly shed the last drop of his blood.

‘The following observations, written from memory and arranged chronologically as far as possible, are only intended to rescue from oblivion a few incidents, remarks, etc., which are probably known to none, or to very few, besides myself.

‘On my arrival at Berlin on May 20, 1866, I was received most graciously by His Royal Highness the Crown Prince, and acquainted with the general situation. I also called upon Prince Frederick Charles, whom I found occupied in drawing up a special *ordre de bataille* for the First Army, under his command. Expressing himself with great frankness, he told me that he desired to introduce a system of combined commands into his army, so that the cavalry and also corps artillery might be brought into action in large masses. I was unable to agree with this scheme, but, all the same, promised, at his request, to mention it to the Crown Prince. I was pleased to hear the Crown Prince say at once that he disapproved of the plan, and that in his army the *ordre de bataille* as given by royal command must be adhered to. His principle was that the army corps and divisions should march separately on different roads whenever possible, only being united in large masses for an engagement, if necessary, under the command of one man. This was carried out, and the very first days of active engagement, especially the Battle of Königgrätz, proved the correctness of the Crown Prince’s view. While in the First Army great difficulties and loss of time were experienced in bringing the three arms of the service up to the battlefield at the right time, the advance of

the Second Army at Königgrätz was carried out quickly and without difficulty by every unit.

‘Whilst the decision for peace or war was still trembling in the balance, at the end of May, and the royal headquarters were obliged to remain at Berlin, His Royal Highness took the opportunity to go to Silesia, with His Majesty’s consent, to tranquillize the inhabitants by his presence, who were alarmed at the prospect of war, and also to visit certain districts of the probable theatre of war in Upper Silesia, with which he was unfamiliar. I had the good fortune to be allowed to accompany him. At Breslau on the 28th, and at Gleiwitz and Cosel on the 29th, numerous conversations took place with the authorities of the province, as well as inspections of the Landwehr. The impressive personality of the Crown Prince, his affability, the confidence and decision with which he discussed the situation, visibly allayed the fears of many and won the hearts of all. In Gleiwitz many *Landräthe*\* informed him that they had received orders to remove all the ready money and more important documents if the enemy should enter their district. They expressed their doubts as to the advisability of such a course, and begged for his decision. Of course he was not in a position to decide this question, but said to them: “If I were a *Landrath* I would on no account leave my district during the campaign; former wars, and notably the last in Jutland, have shown the serious consequences that ensue from the local authorities being absent, and the enemy finding no one to whom to apply in making

\* State officials entrusted with the administration of a district.

their usual requisitions. Local authorities who set the example of flight to the inhabitants fail in their most sacred duty." This and similar remarks by the Crown Prince did much towards encouraging the population, and created a confidence in him which was afterwards splendidly justified. The neglect of this part of the duty of a commander has, as we learn from the history of war, not seldom rendered barren the most brilliant victories.

'As the chances of peace became still more remote, the headquarters of the Second Army were transferred on June 4 from Berlin to the Castle of Fürstenstein, near Schweidnitz, and remained there until the 14th. The Crown Prince employed this period in inspecting all the regiments of the 5th and 6th Army Corps, in making their acquaintance, and giving them an opportunity of seeing their commander.

'Reconnoitring reports and other sources of information gave the impression that the Austrians would concentrate their forces on the frontier of Upper Silesia, and from thence invade Prussia. In order to check them, the Crown Prince resolved to push forward with the army as far as the environs of Neisse, and to take up a position, not only most defensible, but which, after the arrival of the expected reinforcements, admitted either of an attack or a march to effect a junction with the First Army, in case the enemy should move their main forces into Bohemia. This resolution of the Crown Prince, which certainly influenced the later operations of the whole army, could not be executed without the express permission of His Majesty the King. Hence several days passed before the royal sanction arrived from Berlin,

upon the repeated and urgent representations of the Crown Prince. The army marched off on June 12 strong enough for any independent operations, as it had meanwhile been reinforced by the Guard Corps and the 1st Army Corps.

'On the 14th the headquarters were established at Neisse, and remained there until the 24th. Here the Crown Prince busied himself with reconnoitring the ground and thoroughly studying the theatre of war, giving special attention to the roads leading to Bohemia. Unfortunately, on the 18th the melancholy news arrived of the death of little Prince Sigismund,\* which deeply affected His Royal Highness. He succeeded in maintaining outward composure, and in concealing his grief from the eyes of those around him; but an expression of deep gravity, foreign to his countenance, betokened the inward struggle. The military business went on without interruption. Every report about the enemy's movements indicated that they were pushing up into Bohemia, and that an incursion into Upper Silesia was no longer probable. A message was also received from the royal headquarters that the Prussian First Army and that of the Elbe would enter Bohemia, and were to be supported by an advance of the Second Army in a westerly

\* A few days before the departure of the Crown Prince for the army, his youngest son, Sigismund (born September 15, 1864), fell seriously ill. The disease (meningitis cerebri), the nature of which was at first difficult to determine, soon took a fatal turn, and the little Prince died on June 18. The news reached the Crown Prince at the fortress of Neisse, whither he had transferred his headquarters on June 14; his army was on the point of entering Bohemia, and their leader could not be spared. On the evening of the sad day Queen Augusta travelled to Neisse to visit her son and give him the details of Prince Sigismund's last hours.

direction. The town of Gitschin was indicated as the point of junction. The working out of the proposed marches was commenced immediately, and on the evening of the 20th the Crown Prince sent Major von der Burg to Görlitz with a letter to Prince Frederick Charles, in order to learn the intentions of the Prince and act accordingly. Returning on the morning of the 22nd, Major von der Burg brought a letter from Prince Frederick Charles, in which he thanked the Crown Prince for his plan of joining him, but considered it his duty to point out that the march through the mountains was very difficult, and that Frederick the Great in his day had not thought it advisable to undertake it. When the Crown Prince read me the letter, I feared lest it should render him irresolute or wavering, but he said quite calmly : " Well, then, *we* will do it, and it will not be so difficult, considering the improvement in the state of the passes and the tactical mobility of our troops." This prediction was realized in its entirety, and served to increase the confidence of the troops in their royal leader

'The Battle of Nachod, on June 27, afforded the Crown Prince and his staff an opportunity, for the first time in this campaign, of being present and taking an active part in the fighting. The direction of the battle lay chiefly in the hands of General von Steinmetz, whose army corps here received their baptism of fire, and went through it so splendidly. It was especially evident in this battle that the Crown Prince possessed that rare gift of a commander, of not interfering unnecessarily with his subordinates in their own sphere of duty, and yet keeping the general course of the action well under his control. In the

most advanced lines and under the heaviest fire, he maintained his composure and gave the troops a fine example of coolness and devotion to duty. He also knew well how to rouse all to animation and enthusiasm by encouraging them with friendly remarks. He showed great sympathy with the wounded, and, although thoroughly tired, visited them, looked after them, and comforted them in the field-hospitals after the battle, so that every soldier would have gladly given his life for his beloved leader.

‘At the beginning of the battle an incident occurred which is of interest as showing the coolness of the Crown Prince. As he was riding with his staff on the road beyond Nachod towards the firing line, already engaged, in order to gain a good point of view, almost all the advancing troops suddenly halted as if by word of command, and some even turned about. We checked our horses, and saw a troop of Prussian Uhlans on our right riding back to Nachod at a quick pace, as though they were being pursued by a strong force of cavalry. The Crown Prince immediately rode back about a hundred paces to some rising ground, and on coming up with him I found him laughing, as he stationed a battery to defend the Nachod defile. He had not taken this panic as a bad omen, but was struck by the humorous side, and he was not shaken in his confidence in the advancing troops for an instant.

‘After our victory, we arrived late that evening dead tired at our quarters at Hronow, and after our meal the Crown Prince desired me to go to bed at once, saying that he would sit up to receive any reports that might arrive. This vigour after so hard



a day, and his consideration for me and my exhausting duties, seldom exhibited so unselfishly by any commander, quite overwhelmed me. I obeyed, and slept soundly, until I was roused after midnight by the smiling Crown Prince to take his orders for the next day, aided by Major von der Burg. Then only did he lie down to rest.

‘On July 2 we received orders at Königinhof, from the royal headquarters for the Second Army, to halt on the line of the Elbe, and execute extensive reconnaissances in the direction of Josephstadt along both banks of the river. The Crown Prince was much disturbed by this order, and said to me: “Our happy independence is now at an end, and we are compelled to adopt a measure which is absolutely a mistake to my mind. Instead of at once uniting with the army of Prince Frederick Charles, we must separate, and perhaps be beaten singly. In order to obey orders I shall halt, and only send out very small reconnoitring parties.” He ordered me to go at once to Gitschin with Major von Verdy, to remonstrate with His Majesty against the separation of our forces, and to gain information regarding the objects and intentions of the royal headquarters. Soon after six o’clock we arrived at Gitschin, and I was fortunate enough to be received at once by His Majesty. After giving a short report of the affairs of the Second Army, and representing the Crown Prince’s objections, the King seemed to recognise the justice of them, and asked me what the Crown Prince thought about the prospects of the next few days. I could only say that his opinion was that the entire Prussian army ought now to unite on the right bank of the Elbe for



a great battle, which must result in victory for us if our forces were united. After winning the battle the whole army would then march by the shortest route to Vienna. His Majesty seemed pleased at this idea, but General von Moltke, who was present, put a question to me to which it was hard to reply: What did we want in Vienna, since our chief object must be the enemy's army? I could only answer that I shared the Crown Prince's view, because so many wars had been quickly and successfully decided in a similar manner, and that the Crown Prince's remark need not be taken quite literally. About a quarter to four in the morning we reached Königinhof after a fatiguing journey, and I awoke the Crown Prince to make my report to him. Then we had a short rest, and soon afterwards a royal aide-de-camp, Count von Finkenstein, arrived, with the desired order to cross the Elbe.

'At seven o'clock on the morning of July 3 our troops began to cross the Elbe, and the Crown Prince then followed with his staff. It was a difficult ride, as it was not easy to pass the troops on the roads, which were both wet and cut up. The continual thunder of cannon and the smoke rising on our right clearly showed that Prince Frederick Charles was already hotly engaged, and holding his ground against a strong force of Austrians. The question now arose, whether to march in the direction of the firing or to keep on our way. The Crown Prince chose the latter course, as the 1st Army Corps and the cavalry division had already pushed forward to support Prince Frederick Charles on his left flank, and the Second Army, by following their present direction, would probably come

upon the flank, or perhaps the rear, of the Austrians. On reaching the hill at Choteborek, the Crown Prince noticed a tree at Horenowes which could be seen from a great distance, and immediately decided upon this as the *point de vue* for the left wing of the Guards and the right wing of the 6th Army Corps. The 5th Army Corps was to follow as a reserve. The heavy artillery bombardment and the incessant advance of the two gallant army corps soon turned the tide of battle in our favour, and now that the cavalry division and the 1st Army Corps had reinforced our wing, one could read on every face the certainty of a victorious junction with the First Army. It was a gratifying feeling for the Crown Prince to have brought about a successful issue so speedily by coming up at the right moment and to the right place with the Second Army. In the midst of a heavy shell fire he graciously pressed my hand, and said: "Now we can even think about the pursuit." The 5th Army Corps, which was still intact, and the cavalry division received orders to advance through the first line and to undertake the pursuit. Unfortunately, the cavalry division delayed in carrying out this movement, as the enemy were apparently retreating in perfect order, and when the 5th Army Corps reached the head of our forces, the pursuit was stopped by General von Moltke by the King's order. The Crown Prince was disappointed at hearing of this order, which might possibly have the effect of losing us the chief fruits of the victory. About six o'clock in the evening, when the firing had almost entirely ceased, and the Austrian army was in full flight, the Crown Prince rode over a large portion of the battle-

field of the Second Army with us, made a few brief speeches to the troops and their leaders, praising and thanking them, and talking kindly to the wounded, and then went to look for His Majesty the King, whom we at last found at Rotzis. It is impossible for me to describe their touching meeting. After also greeting Prince Frederick Charles, we all rode gravely and silently back across the battlefield to Horenowes, where we had established our quarters. We arrived there at ten o'clock at night in complete darkness, and found but a sorry lodging awaiting us. The strongest nerves were overwrought by fifteen hours on horseback in cold wet weather, in constant suspense and excitement, with no food all day but a small piece of dry bread; but the Crown Prince set us a fine example, for he showed not a trace of fatigue. He was only concerned for the troops and for us, and seemed never to think of himself and what he had done. He only lay down to rest after being convinced that there were no further arrangements to be made.

'The days immediately following the great battle were not utilized as the Crown Prince desired, since his hands were tied by superior orders. Although he urged a swifter and more energetic pursuit of the enemy, only comparatively short marches were made, and it appeared as though politics were the obstructing element. The Crown Prince was exceedingly anxious that an armistice should not be concluded. A little incident that happened on July 8 indicates this. The headquarters of the Second Army arrived on the 7th at Chroustowitz, a castle belonging to the Prince of Thurn and Taxis. The next morning I was suddenly

awoke by the appearance in my room of an old acquaintance, the Austrian General von Gablenz, who informed me that he was on his way to Pardubitz to the King, but could go no farther, as his horses were entirely done up; he therefore asked me to supply him with fresh ones. As he seemed very tired, I made him a comfortable bed on my sofa, and let him have half an hour's rest. While he was breakfasting I had the Crown Prince roused. He at once got up, and said to me: "He wants to arrange an armistice, but that must not be allowed. I must get first to the King at Pardubitz, and protest against it; we must detain Gablenz. Tell him to come to me in half an hour's time." After a tolerably long audience, General von Gablenz entered his carriage and drove off. I had ordered the driver on pain of heavy punishment to drive as slowly as possible by a roundabout way that I had indicated. Meanwhile the Crown Prince drove immediately to Pardubitz by a shorter route, and went at once to the King. I am not aware of what transpired, but on the arrival of Gablenz, half an hour later, he was not received by His Majesty, and was obliged to return without having accomplished his purpose. We also returned at once, and although one of our horses fell on the way, and much time was lost in harnessing a transport horse in its place, we were already at work when General von Gablenz again arrived to enjoy a good *déjeuner* before proceeding on his journey. He had no idea that the Crown Prince had also been to Pardubitz.

'At the time the Crown Prince visited the royal headquarters at Pardubitz, on July 6, it seemed tolerably certain that the main body of the defeated

army would retreat, not upon Vienna, but on Olmütz. His Majesty the King therefore decided, with regard to further operations, that the Second Army should pursue them in the direction of Olmütz, but that the First and Elbe Armies should march straight for Vienna, as the Crown Prince had advised even before the great battle. On the 7th the Prince's headquarters moved through Chroustowitz, Hohenmauth, and Leitomischel to Trübau (in Moravia), where they arrived on the 10th. At this juncture the Second Army received orders to take up a position near Hohenstadt, north-west of Olmütz, with their rear towards Glatz, and to retreat in that direction if pressed by superior numbers of the enemy, thus inducing them to carry the pursuit into Silesia. At the same time their communications between Olmütz and Vienna were to be cut, all movements along that line were to be prevented, and the left flank of the First Army was to be supported. The Crown Prince was not a little disturbed by the reflection that such an elaborate manœuvre, based upon uncertain reports, would lead to the complete separation of the Second Army from the main force, and might entail the danger of being defeated singly by the concentrated troops of the enemy, and thus prevent them fulfilling the other tasks assigned to them. When General von Moltke arrived at Trübau on the evening of the 10th, the Crown Prince told him of his fears, and endeavoured to convince him that the Second Army must take up a position in the west or south-west of Olmütz, if they were to succeed in their other tasks. General von Moltke seemed disinclined to adopt this view, and returned to Zwittau without

coming to any decision. The Crown Prince therefore resolved to send Major von Verdy next day with a memorandum on the situation to His Majesty at the royal headquarters, begging him to sanction the movement of the army, not to the environs of Hohenstadt, but to Prossnitz. At five o'clock in the evening Major von Verdy came back with the royal sanction, and at seven orders were given to march. Although there were reasons for uneasiness in the fact that the 1st and 5th Army Corps and the headquarters were marching in the direction of Prossnitz, with the enemy on their left flank, and almost impassable mountains on their right, yet all were in the best of spirits, and the Crown Prince only smiled at the fears of the Duke of Coburg, who endeavoured to infect others with his own uneasiness and despondency.

‘On July 13 the Crown Prince marched with his staff to Opatowitz, and thence sent Captain Mischke to the royal headquarters for a verbal explanation of the reasons which prevented the Guards and 6th Army Corps from following the Second Army, and led them to march in the direction of Brünn. On the 14th we entered Konitz and took up our quarters in the uncomfortable old castle of that name. The reports of the cavalry, as well as reliable news from scouts, clearly showed that the enemy’s army had commenced their march from Olmütz to Vienna several days previously. It was now evident how accurately the Crown Prince had gauged the situation, by marching with the army to Prossnitz instead of to Hohenstadt. Orders were immediately given for a reconnaissance in force next morning in the direction of Prerau, for the purpose of gaining reliable information and making a



vigorous attack on the still retreating enemy. The feeling that now matters were taking the right course was not to last long, for at noon on the 15th Captain Mischke returned from the royal headquarters with orders for the Second Army which threatened to cause important alterations, of which the details were not entirely clear; the Guards and the 6th Army Corps were to be brought up to the environs of Olmütz. Moreover, General von Moltke expressed himself greatly dissatisfied with the slow advance of the Second Army, forgetting that orders and directions from the royal headquarters had increased the difficulties of the toilsome march in a mountainous region.

‘The Crown Prince was very much irritated at this. It appeared to him that there was a conspiracy to bind his hands and direct his movements to the smallest detail, for which he would then have to bear the responsibility. He spoke to me very bitterly on this subject, and hinted that he would request His Majesty to relieve him from his command, if this went on. I therefore proposed to send Colonel von Stosch to the royal headquarters, desiring General von Moltke to allow the Guards and the 6th Army Corps to continue their march on Brünn, and in the event of a refusal giving His Majesty a personal account of the Crown Prince’s views with regard to the further operations of the Second Army. The Crown Prince consented to this plan. As Colonel von Stosch was entering his carriage at five o’clock in the afternoon, the news arrived of a successful engagement at Tobitschau, in which eighteen guns and nearly 200 prisoners were taken. Armed with this good news, he found full appreciation at Brünn of the Crown



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Prince's ideas, and obtained full sanction for his arrangements of the next few days. He returned at noon on the 16th to our new quarters at Proedlitz, and so did much to allay the feelings of uneasiness in the headquarters of the Second Army. On the 17th an order was brought the formal sanction, with His Majesty's command that the Guards and 6th Army Corps should continue the pursuit by way of Brünn. The situation was so far simplified that it was now thought sufficient to leave only the 1st Army Corps before Olmütz, and to march southwards with the 5th Army Corps to join hands with the First Army. This ended the active part taken by the Second Army in the campaign.'

## CHAPTER XII

### OTHER INCIDENTS OF THE SIX WEEKS' CAMPAIGN

1866

DURING the stay of the headquarters of the Second Army at the Castle of Fürstenstein, near Freiburg in Silesia, the Crown Prince received Duncker's application to retire from his service. In this document he gave as his chief reason that the Crown Prince had made but little use of his services during the last few months, and concluded with the request that the Prince would permit him to petition the King for some other employment—if possible, in the State Archives. The Crown Prince replied as follows to Duncker's application on June 13 :

‘You will understand that your letter of June 12 and the request it contained moved me deeply. After five years of faithful and unselfish labour in aiding me to prepare for the gravest and most important of earthly dignities, you now ask my permission to petition His Majesty the King for some other State employment.

‘I am bound to grant your request, as it is my principle never to stand in the way of any who are in my service, when an occasion offers for them to find

agreeable or advantageous employment elsewhere. I will gladly do all that lies in my power to fulfil your wish for employment in the Archives, unless a chair at the Berlin or any other University should accord better with your talents and your former fruitful activity.

‘Let me say frankly that it will be hard for me to part from you. On looking back at the years that you have spent at my side, these seem to include an important period of my life—I may say, even the most important of my manhood. Your discourses, the discussions with you, and the numerous tasks you have undertaken for me—all these have contributed in a great degree to develop my appreciation of our time and our institutions. The recollection of those years will remain inseparably connected with the sincerest gratitude for all that you have done for me, the more so as I am aware that you have often been obliged to suppress your own inclinations. As the conflicts which have unfortunately arisen in the life of our State since 1858 became more acute of late, we have often had differences of opinion. Occasionally you personally experienced the annoyances which are only too often the fate of those in close relations with those in a high position, and which occur both in public life and in the attacks of the daily press. But you have always proclaimed your views openly and straightforwardly, and have never made such affairs a pretext for breaking our personal connection. My duty now calls me, as Heir to the Throne, to draw my sword in a quarrel arising from a system with which you sympathized, while I renounced it altogether. I can perfectly well understand that you have been oppressed by my recent reserve, and that you feel a desire for some

other occupation, at the prospect of a war that will probably keep me away from home for a considerable period.

‘Let your future labours be what they may, my affectionate sympathy will always attend you, and you will always find in me one who listens to your views with pleasure, and intends to make further use of the treasures of experience and manifold knowledge you possess. I therefore now bid you farewell at the close of your personal service to me, assuring you once more of my sincere gratitude.’

On the evening of June 20 a royal command was received at the headquarters of the Silesian Army, directing that on the morning of the 21st the Crown Prince should notify all the commanders of the opposing Austrian outposts that Austria’s conduct at Frankfort-on-the-Main was considered an act of war, and that the Prussian troops had received orders to act accordingly. On the same evening the Crown Prince issued the following General Order to his troops :

‘SOLDIERS OF THE SECOND ARMY !

‘You have heard the words of our King and War Lord. His Majesty’s endeavours to secure a continuance of the blessings of peace to the country have been in vain. With a heavy heart, but strong in purpose, relying upon the devotion and gallantry of his troops, the King has determined to fight for the honour and independence of Prussia, as well as for the reorganization of Germany, and its formation into a powerful entity. The gracious confidence of my royal father having placed me at your head, I am proud, as the King’s first servant, to stake my life

and my fortunes to secure the possession of all that is dearest to our country.

‘Soldiers! for the first time for fifty years an enemy equal to us in strength stands arrayed against us. Trust in your strength and the proven excellence of your arms. Remember, our task is to beat an enemy whom our greatest King defeated with but a small force.

‘Forward, then, with the old Prussian cry, “With God for King and Fatherland.”

‘FREDERICK WILLIAM, Crown Prince,  
‘Commander-in-Chief of the Second Army.

‘HEADQUARTERS AT NEISSE,  
‘June 20, 1866.’

This was the first occasion on which the Crown Prince addressed the troops under his command before a great and decisive event.

General von Verdy du Vernois, the former War Minister, in his work ‘With the Royal Headquarters 1870-71,’ relates the following incident of the Battle of Skalitz, which throws a strong light on the Crown Prince’s capacities as a commander :

‘I take this opportunity, in order that I may not be thought to undervalue the military capacity of this departed scion of the Hohenzollerns, who will ever be dear to all German hearts, to insist particularly on the fact that the Crown Prince united in his person to an eminent degree all the qualities of an army leader. Everyone knows this who was near him during either of the two campaigns, and I myself can attest it from my own experience, as I had the good fortune in 1866 to serve on his staff.’



‘It was on June 28 of that year, when the 5th Corps was engaged near Skalitz and the Guards near Soor, that the Commander-in-Chief of the Second Army found himself obliged, much to his regret, to remain at some distance from the actual fighting, so as to direct the various corps according to the reports as they came in. He therefore took his stand on the heights of Kosteletz, midway between the two corps then engaged.

‘We had been present the day before at the victorious engagement of the 5th Corps at Nachod, but we also knew that the attempt of the 1st Army Corps to debouch on the same day from the mountains at Trautenau had not been successful. Moreover, while on the heights we received telegraphic information of our defeat at Langensalza, and that of our allies at Custozza. On the issue of the two engagements then proceeding depended the success or failure of the operations of the Crown Prince’s army. It was indispensable that we should be victorious in both places, for only then would it be possible for the whole army to debouch from the mountains, and to establish communications in the direction of Gitschin with the army of Prince Frederick Charles and that of the Elbe, which had already penetrated into Bohemia. Our position was therefore most serious.

‘The Crown Prince assembled the officers of his staff around him; leaning on his sword, and fixing his clear eyes on us, he explained to us once more minutely and in the most lucid manner the whole position of his army; he repeated the instructions which had been given, as well as the reasons for them, alluding at the same time to the great importance of

the day. To this he added the question whether any one of us had any proposal to make which we thought might contribute to success. When we had answered in the negative, he finished with the words: "Well, then, we have done our duty. We have considered our situation in every direction to the best of our ability, and have made dispositions which, so far as we know, must and should succeed; all the rest lies in the hand of God." Not a trace of excitement, no glimpse of a pessimistic view of things, was observable in our noble Prince. With the greatest calm and attention he followed the course of the two engagements, and perused the reports as they came in with the greatest calmness before issuing orders. As is well known, the bravery of the commanders and the troops gained a victory at both places, at Soor and at Skalitz.'

Prince Kraft zu Hohenlohe-Ingelfingen, an equally high authority, has also given an account of the Crown Prince on the day of Skalitz. He writes as follows:

'In adding a few remarks to show the Emperor Frederick's eminence as a commander, I prefer to dwell on our meeting on the heights of Kosteletz. About ten o'clock I reported myself to him after a six miles' march with one battalion, one squadron, and five batteries. He asked me whether I were acquainted with the situation, to which I replied in the negative. He then said: "Yesterday at Nachod Steinmetz beat an Austrian corps, and is now fighting at Skalitz. He has probably two and a half army corps against him. But as he has Hoffmann's brigade of the 6th Corps as a reinforcement, a General like Stein-

metz can hold his own against a twofold superiority of the enemy. Yesterday Bonin retreated from Trautenau into Silesia. I have lost all communication with the Guard Corps. Advancing by the Eipel Pass, they may have been annihilated out there, or may have fought the most glorious battle that one can imagine. My whole reserve force here at the defile of Kosteletz consists of one company and what you have brought me. Here I am condemned to do nothing but smoke one pipe after another, for I have given directions that reports are to be made to me on these heights, and if I leave them I shall be throwing the whole army into confusion." The Crown Prince said all this in the same tone as if he were ordering a dinner.

'In some consternation I remarked that in this case the second echelons of the ammunition columns were marching straight towards the enemy. He inquired what direction they had taken, and on hearing that they had orders to march from Braunau to Parschnitz, he remarked quite calmly: "Well, then they are lost." I informed the Crown Prince that this march had been ordered by the Supreme Command, which had threatened to court-martial any who disobeyed the orders for the march, and that I had been directed to take my further orders from the Guard Corps here at Kosteletz, but finding none of the Guard Corps, I begged him to send me to countermand the orders of the ammunition columns. He replied quietly: "No, I will not interfere with the special orders of the corps." He then measured the distance on the map, asked when the columns had started, and said: "Anyhow, the disaster must have taken place already. It

is impossible now for an order to reach them in time, so leave the matter as it is."

'He replied in the affirmative to my inquiry as to whether there was time for my troops to have a meal after their six miles' march. He then asked whether I had happened to see anything of the fighting from any point on my way. I told him that from a hill between Hronow and Kosteletz I had seen fighting in the distance with my marine telescope in a direction south of Trautenau, and had not been able to understand it. The troops having their rear towards Silesia, whom I took to be ours, were in difficulties, for their artillery and infantry were firing from the same alignment; the enemy, facing Silesia, had their infantry some distance in front of the artillery, and I had seen infantry lines advancing. I had therefore believed that the First Corps (Bonin) was being driven back. What was inexplicable to me was that shrapnels were constantly bursting in the air over the Austrian lines, and we had no ammunition of the kind. "Then," he said, "the troops where the shrapnels were bursting had the advantage?" "Yes," I replied. "I will explain that. The Guard Corps is fighting with its front towards Silesia, for it crossed at Eipel in rear of Gablenz, and the Austrians are fighting south of Trautenau with their rear towards Silesia. What you took for the Austrians was the Guard Corps, and they were having the best of it when you saw the battle." This was all said as calmly as if he were talking of the most trivial matter.

'After some time the cannonade at Skalitz ceased. It was very warm, and the air was so still on the top of the hill that on lighting a cigarette the

match burned with a straight flame as though in a room.

'All at once the thunder of cannon was heard on the left of Skalitz, and clouds of dust were seen rising towards Nachod. The Crown Prince looked at them through his glass, and called up Colonel Walker, of the English Army: "Let us speak English, so that nobody shall notice that I am anxious. You have more experience in war than I have. Is this dust caused by moving troops?" "There is no doubt about it," replied Walker. "Then Steinmetz is beaten, and is in retreat, still fighting, towards the county of Glatz." "I think so, too," said Walker. I spread out the map, took my bearings, and after five minutes remarked: "The dust has moved half a mile in five minutes, and troops even in flight cannot move as fast as that. The dust cannot therefore be caused by troops on the march." "What else can it be?" he said quietly. "The air is still." I kept silence, for I, too, could not explain the phenomenon. Soon afterwards the thick cloud of dust came towards us along the road from Jaromirz to Skalitz. "That is Prince Albrecht (the son) with the Heavy Cavalry Brigade of the Guard, which I sent to Steinmetz, in full flight," said the Prince, smiling, but in some concern. "I should like to ride towards him, but I must wait here for a report from Steinmetz." I now became uneasy, and asked the Crown Prince whether I might occupy the defile of Kosteletz with five companies and five batteries.

"Let the troops have their meal in peace. The dust is still several miles away. The enemy cannot be here under two hours. We have still an

hour's time before we need disturb the troops." The dust soon approached us with the speed of the wind, and we could see the road underneath it, and ascertain that no one was moving in it. A few minutes later we were in the midst of a whirlwind that made it hard for us to remain on the hill. It also thundered violently without rain. It was a sandstorm.

'When the storm was nearly over, a report came from Steinmetz that he had taken Skalitz, and the enemy was in retreat. "Now I can visit the wounded at Kosteletz," said the Crown Prince, and he allowed me to quit my position in reserve, with the permission to march after the Guard Corps by way of Eipel.

"During our long stay on the heights of Kosteletz, I expressed to General von Blumenthal my admiration of the Crown Prince's calmness. "Oh, you don't know him yet!" said Blumenthal. "When I submitted the plan of the march across the frontier to him, and pointed out the dangers we should run if Benedek attacked the separated corps with his entire force and destroyed them one after the other, he answered: 'Do you take me for a child that you tell me this now? I saw it long ago. But what does one army matter? The whole of Prussia is at stake in this war. If my army is beaten, I shall not return to Silesia alive.'"

The appearance of the Crown Prince at the time of the campaign is thus described by Louis Schneider, of the royal suite, in an account written at Nikolsburg on July 20, 1866 :

'Towards evening the Crown Prince came from his headquarters at Eisgrub to visit his royal father. This was the first time that I saw him wearing the Order



Pour le Mérite, so nobly earned at Königgrätz. He had grown a full beard, and looked as fine a man as one could wish to see, bearing in his countenance traces of the late tremendous events he had passed through. . . . In the field the Crown Prince presented a most striking and imposing appearance, and the thought involuntarily occurred to one that he would know how to keep what had been lately won.'

At Nikolsburg the future development of the German question was already being discussed, and the Crown Prince gave it as his opinion that his father should assume the title of King of Germany. Bismarck reminded him that there were other Kings in Germany, such as those of Hanover, Saxony, etc.

'They must take the title of Duke again,' was his reply.

'But they will not like that,' rejoined Bismarck.

'They will have to,' cried the Crown Prince.

Later on the Crown Prince gave up this idea, but declared at the beginning of 1867 that the King ought to assume the title of German Emperor. The title of President of a Confederation, he said, conveyed nothing to the nation; but the unity now achieved would, as it were, be visibly incorporated by the revival of the imperial dignity, while the memory of the ancient power and greatness of the empire would be universally inspiring. This idea in itself was perfectly correct. But it was evidently premature; a North German Empire would have aroused no enthusiasm in the north, and would have retarded the completion of the national work in the south. King William decisively rejected the proposal; with his



love of simplicity he desired only to be the chief of the Confederation, and the first among his peers.\*

The Crown Prince here showed his powers of discernment in State affairs by successfully supporting Bismarck's policy at the critical moment, for through his personal intervention he succeeded in gaining his father's consent to the modified conditions of peace, concerning which the King had had a violent dispute with Count Bismarck.

The position at that time was exceedingly difficult. All the Generals shared the disinclination to break off the uninterrupted course of victory ; and during these days the King was more readily accessible to military influence than to that of Bismarck, who was the only person at headquarters who laid stress upon the general political point of view in the negotiations.

A council of war was held, on July 23, under the presidency of the King, in which the question to be decided was whether peace should be made under the conditions offered or the war continued. Bismarck declared his conviction that peace must be concluded on the Austrian terms, but remained alone in his opinion ; the King supported the military majority. At this juncture Bismarck set to work to commit to paper the reasons which in his opinion spoke for the conclusion of peace, and begged the King, in the event of his not accepting the advice for which he was responsible, to relieve him of his functions as Minister. Armed with this document, he set out the following day to amplify it by word of mouth.

In the royal antechamber he found two Colonels with a report on the spread of cholera among their

\* Von Sybel, '*Die Begründung des Deutschen Reichs*,' vol. v.

troops, barely half of whom were fit for service. The alarming figures confirmed his resolve to make the acceptance of the Austrian terms a Cabinet question, and he unfolded to the King the political and military reasons which militated against the continuance of the war.

In Bismarck's opinion the victors must avoid wounding Austria too deeply, leaving behind unnecessary bitterness of feeling or desire for revenge ; they ought rather to keep the possibility in view of becoming friends again with their adversary of the moment. It appeared to Bismarck that a prosecution of the war in Hungary, whither it would probably be transferred, would not repay them, and that the successes to be won there would be insignificant compared to the victories they had hitherto gained, and consequently would be calculated to diminish their prestige—quite apart from the fact that the prolongation of the war would pave the way for a French intervention. Prussia must end matters rapidly, before France gained time to bring further diplomatic action to bear upon Austria.

To all this the King raised no objection, but declared the actual terms inadequate, without, however, definitely formulating his own demands. The chief culprit could not be allowed to escape unpunished, but justice once satisfied, they could let the misguided partners off more easily, and he insisted on cessions of territory from Austria. Passing on to the German States, he spoke of various acquisitions by pruning down the territories of all the opponents of Prussia.\*

Bismarck pointed out that Prussia's aim was not to

\* 'Bismarck,' vol. ii., pp. 43-48.

administer retributive justice, but to pursue a policy ; that he wished to avoid, in the German Federation of the future, the sight of mutilated territories, whose Princes and peoples might very easily (such is human weakness) retain a lively wish to recover their former possessions by means of foreign help ; such allies would be very unreliable. The same would be the case if Würzburg or Nuremberg were demanded of Bavaria, for the purpose of compensating Saxony, a plan, moreover, which would interfere with the dynastic partiality of His Majesty for Anspach. Bismarck also had to resist plans aiming at an enlargement of the Grand-Duchy of Baden, the annexation of the Bavarian Palatinate, and an extension in the region of the Lower Main. The Aschaffenburg district of Bavaria was at the same time regarded as a suitable compensation to Hesse-Darmstadt for the loss of Upper Hesse, which would result from the projected Main frontier. Later, at Berlin, the only part of this plan still under negotiation was the cession of that portion of Bavarian territory which lay on the right bank of the Main, inclusive of the town of Bayreuth, to Prussia ; the question then arose whether the boundary should run on the Northern or Red Main, or the Southern (White) Main.

The resistance which Bismarck was obliged, in accordance with his convictions, to offer to the King's views with regard to following up the military successes, and to his inclination to continue the victorious advance, excited him to such a degree that a prolongation of the discussion became impossible, and, under the impression that his opinion was rejected, Bismarck left the room with the idea of begging the

King to allow him, in his capacity as officer, to join his regiment.

On returning to his room, Bismarck was in such a mood that the thought occurred to him whether it would not be better to throw himself out of the open window on the fourth story. The door opened, and though he did not look round, he suspected that the person entering was the Crown Prince, whose room in the same corridor he had just passed. Bismarck felt a hand placed on his shoulder, as the Crown Prince observed :

‘ You know that I was opposed to this war. You considered it necessary, and the responsibility for it lies on you. If you are convinced that our end is now attained, and that peace must be concluded, I am ready to support you and your opinions with my father.’

The Crown Prince then repaired to the King, and came back after a short half-hour in the same calm, friendly mood, but with the words : ‘ It has been a very difficult business, but my father has consented.’ This consent found expression in a note pencilled on the margin of one of Bismarck’s last memoranda, something to this effect : ‘ Inasmuch as my Minister-President has left me in the lurch in the face of the enemy, and I am not in a position to supply his place here, I have discussed the question with my son, and as he has associated himself with the Minister-President’s opinion, I find myself reluctantly compelled, after such brilliant victories on the part of the army, to bite into this sour apple and accept a disgraceful peace.’\*

\* Bismarck’s ‘ Reflections and Reminiscences,’ vol. ii., pp. 43-48.

The preliminaries of peace were signed on July 26, and the ratifications exchanged on the 28th.

Later on the Crown Prince expressed himself to Professor Delbrück with regard to his rôle of mediator at the negotiations of Nikolsburg as follows :

‘You know that I was very much opposed to Bismarck during the conflict, but when the welfare of the country was at stake, I went to him and assured him of my support. As I was going up the steep hill to the castle at Nikolsburg, I met General von Moltke halfway, who said to me : “You will find a fine state of things up there ; the King and Bismarck are not on speaking terms. The Emperor of Austria has offered peace through the mediation of the Emperor Napoleon on condition of the integrity of Saxony being preserved. The King will not agree to this.” On my arrival I found matters really in this state : the King and Bismarck had shut themselves in their rooms, and neither would go to the other. I acted the part of mediator. A council of war was called and the affair discussed. Then the King turned to me, the only occasion on which he did so, and said : “Speak, you, in the name of the future.”’

The Crown Prince then related in detail the further negotiations with Saxony until the definite settlement in Berlin with King John in person.

Duke Ernest of Coburg gives the following account in his memoirs of the further intervention of the Crown Prince during the peace negotiations :

‘On taking leave of Count Bismarck at Nikolsburg (July 29), I was surprised to hear that even at this stage of the negotiations for peace all difficulties, especially with regard to Hanover and Hesse, were

not yet settled. I therefore proposed that the Count should drive with me to the Crown Prince at Eisgrub. The Crown Prince expected me to breakfast, as I hoped to get back in time. Count Bismarck gladly accepted my proposal.

'On our arrival at Eisgrub, Count Bismarck went at once to the Crown Prince, while I made my preparations for my next day's journey and took leave of many of my comrades at headquarters. Count Bismarck left us after breakfast and returned to Nikolsburg. The Crown Prince promised to follow him thither next day, and later on I had an opportunity of hearing that this last intervention by the Crown Prince with regard to the settlement of the annexation questions had been highly successful, so that the King's message of incorporation could be read in both Chambers of the Landtag on August 17.'

After the conclusion of the preliminaries of peace, the dispute between the Crown and the Parliament had to be arranged, and the Crown Prince again took an active part in the negotiations during the return journey from Prague to Berlin on August 4, 1866. Bismarck explained at length to the King in the presence of the Crown Prince the reasons why it was now necessary for the Crown to obtain a bill of indemnity from the Landtag sanctioning the late acts of the Government. The King, strong in the consciousness of victory, was vehemently opposed to the idea of asking pardon by means of a bill of indemnity, while Bismarck considered it necessary to build a golden bridge for the retreat of his Parliamentary opponents, restoring the internal peace of



Prussia before continuing the German policy of the King. Bismarck's conversation with the King and the Crown Prince lasted for some hours, and took place in a railway-carriage. Though the Crown Prince did not support Bismarck openly, he at all events manifested his full agreement with him.

By means of a correspondence between Bismarck and the other Ministers during the stay of the former at Nikolsburg, the draft of the Speech from the Throne had been drawn up, and had been accepted by His Majesty, with the exception of the clause relating to the indemnity. At last, however, the King reluctantly assented to that also, and the Landtag was opened on August 5 with the announcement that the representatives of the country were to proceed to an *ex post facto* approval of the administration, carried on without an Appropriation Act.\*

The Crown Prince reached Berlin on August 4, and went to Potsdam the following morning to visit the tomb of his deceased son Sigismund in the Friedenskirche. He then attended the opening of the Landtag by the King on August 6, before rejoining his consort and children at Heringsdorf to enjoy a few days of peace and happiness after the toils and excitement of the campaign.

The Crown Prince now took an eager part in the regulation of German affairs. He admitted to the Ministers that during the campaign he had become convinced of the skill with which the diplomatic business had been conducted. He said he would not give up what had been gained by the Prussian

\* Bismarck's 'Reflections and Reminiscences,' vol. ii., p. 69 *et seq.*



victories for anything in the world. He was now in favour of annexation, and expressed himself strongly at a Cabinet meeting against the Guelphs and the Houses of Hesse and Nassau. During the first part of August all the Ministers of South Germany assembled in Berlin to negotiate with the Prussian Government. At this period powerful efforts were constantly made to influence King William in favour of the mediatized German Princes, but the King remained firm. In this connection Herr Abeken remarks in reference to the Crown Prince in a letter of August 10 to his wife :

‘The Crown Prince is acting very well, and the campaign and the stirring time have had a good effect upon him, not the least of the successes of that period being that there has been a *rapprochement* between him and Bismarck, and that at least in external and German policy he thoroughly agrees with him.’\*

The Crown Prince did not, however, desire to be identified with the Prussian Ministry, and in announcing his reconciliation with their external policy at the same time declared his strong disapproval of their domestic policy.

At that time the idea was mooted that the Crown Prince should take up his residence at Hanover as Viceroy. Both the town and country were accustomed to a Court in their midst, and it was desirable that the capital should not suffer from the change. Moreover, the sympathetic personality of the Crown Prince and his warm interest in matters of public

\* Heinrich Abeken, ‘A Simple Life in Troublous Times,’ p. 346.

utility guaranteed a favourable development of affairs under the altered circumstances. The plan fell through, however, as the Crown Prince made the acceptance of this position dependent upon conditions which in the interests of the uniform government of the Prussian State could not be granted.

During the following weeks the Crown Prince and family stayed at Schloss Erdmannsdorf in Silesia. He devoted his whole time to the supervision and improvement of the war hospital established in the Hirschberg district. He was assisted herein by his royal consort, who had already at Berlin and during her stay at Heringsdorf given the warmest support to the care of the wounded, and had fitted up a number of rooms in her palace for the reception of wounded officers. They made visits of inspection together almost daily, and only a few days were devoted to recreation, in the form of mountain excursions. During these trips the mountaineers got to know the Prince as a happy father, whose greatest delight was to take one or the other of his children on his back and carry them up the steepest inclines of the road. The people were sorry indeed to part from the royal couple on September 18.

Later on the Crown Princess arranged a charity bazaar in her palace at Berlin, to which the most heterogeneous collection of gifts was sent from all parts of the monarchy, and even of the world. Soon an astonishing quantity of costly and useful articles were set in order. The bazaar was arranged in numerous sections, with saleswomen of high rank presiding at each, while the Crown Prince himself went round with a purse to collect money for his

brave soldiers. Thousands of thalers were obtained in this manner for the wounded.

Peace between Prussia and Austria was signed at Prague on August 23, and the exchange of ratifications took place a week later. Austria agreed to recognise the dissolution of the German Confederation, consenting to the reorganization of Germany to the exclusion of the Austrian Empire, and transferring her rights to Schleswig and Holstein to the King of Prussia. By the incorporation of these Duchies, together with Hanover, the Electorate of Hesse, the Duchy of Nassau and the free town of Frankfort, the Prussian State acquired an increase of above 1,300 square (German) miles of territory and more than 4,000,000 of inhabitants.

On September 5 the Prussian army set out on its homeward march from Austria, and the Crown Prince issued the following army order to the troops led by him :

‘Peace has been made with Austria. A campaign unequalled in glory throughout history has been brought to a brilliant close in less than three months. The dignity and position of Prussia have been considerably augmented, and the principles of a prosperous and successful development of the destiny of Germany have, God willing, been safe-guarded.

‘The Second Army has had a decisive share in the successes of this campaign. By the engagements at Nachod and Skalitz, at Schweinschädel, Soor and Königinhof, we protected the fair province of Silesia from invasion, defeated four Austrian army corps one after another, and established communications with

the First Army. In the glorious battle of Königgrätz, won under the King's command, the Second Army had the honour of deciding the day. In an eager and untiring pursuit of the enemy we fought several victorious engagements at Tobitschau and in the neighbourhood of Olmütz, and had at length reached the gates of the enemy's capital, when Austria negotiated for peace.

'You can look back on your deeds with just pride; every one of you has done his duty in the full sense of the word; and the achievements of the Second Army will take a worthy place in our history, already rich in glory and honour. With you I thank God for leading us from victory to victory, and after a short and glorious war to an honourable peace. As long as I live it will be an inspiring feeling and a dear and everlasting remembrance to have stood at the head of the brave troops of the Guard Corps, and the 1st, 5th and 6th Army Corps during this memorable war.

'On bidding a hearty farewell to my gallant and beloved Second Army, I thank the Generals and officers, the non-commissioned officers and soldiers, for their bravery, endurance, and devotion to duty, and I express my anticipation that during the peace all will endeavour to preserve untarnished and undiminished the old, but still well maintained, reputation of the Prussian army.

'FREDERICK WILLIAM,

'Crown Prince.

'BERLIN, *September 8, 1866.*'

A week later the dissolution of the command of

the Second Army was announced by a Royal Cabinet Order.

In his diary Theodor von Bernhardt cites an interesting remark made by the Emperor Napoleon on the subject of the Crown Prince's victories about this time :

'I spent the evening at Droysen's. Baron Dyhrn told us that the Princess Biron of Courland, *née* Princess von Meschtschersky, is in correspondence with some members of the present Court circle in France, and that in letters she has received Napoleon III. is said to have been very much disturbed and put out by the Prussian victories; on hearing of the Crown Prince's successes he struck the table with his hand in a sort of despair, and exclaimed, "The future King a good General, too! That is the last straw!" or words to that effect.'

On September 18 the Crown Prince took part in the triumphal entry of the troops into Breslau. King William took up his position on horseback near the monument of Frederick the Great, while the victorious troops marched past with waving standards and martial music, amid the loud cheers of the people.

On the same morning the Crown Prince received the following letter from his father :

'BERLIN,

'September 20, 1866.

'At the commencement of the war now so gloriously concluded, I gave you the greatest possible proof of royal and paternal confidence, by entrusting you with the command of an army. You have fully justified

this confidence by winning victory after victory at the head of the Second Army, which has gained one of the foremost positions in the history of the Prussian Army by its endurance, devotion, and bravery. By an honourable peace, a future is opened up to Prussia and Germany, which you one day will be called upon to consummate with the aid of God.

‘In recognition of your glorious leadership, and following the example of my late King and father in 1815, I have prepared a special decoration for you and Prince Frederick Charles, consisting of a golden star with the medallion of our great ancestor, Frederick the Great, and the inscription “*Pour le mérite*,” and the cross belonging to it, to be worn round the neck; I herewith send it you. The army commanded by you will see, in this decoration bestowed upon you, a new recognition of their deeds, which have earned the warmest gratitude of their King and country.

‘Your grateful King and father,

‘WILLIAM.

‘To my son, the Crown Prince.’

On September 20 and 21 the Prussian Guards made their special entry into the capital. On this occasion the Crown Prince received a further mark of distinction from his father. When the Rifle Battalion of the Guards had reached the position of the King, on their march through the Brandenburg Gate, the monarch placed himself at the head of the battalion, and led them past the Crown Prince with drawn sword.

A complete political amnesty was granted on the occasion of the triumphal entry of the troops into Berlin. The merit of having persuaded the King to

this act of grace is due to the joint exertions of the Crown Prince and Count Bismarck.

On the day of the entry Bismarck visited the Crown Prince at Potsdam. On this occasion he is said to have observed to the Crown Prince: 'What matter if they hang me, provided the rope by which they string me up unites this new Germany more firmly to your throne?'

It was universally remarked on the second day of the entry that the Crown Prince and Bismarck had a long and apparently cordial conversation during the march past of the troops.



## CHAPTER XIII

### THE CROWN PRINCE UNDER THE NORTH GERMAN CONFEDERATION

1866-69

IN the month of September, the marriage of the Czarewich with Princess Dagmar of Denmark took place, and in compliance with the King's commands the Crown Prince set out with a large suite for St. Petersburg in order to represent his father on that occasion. After the ceremony was over, the Crown Prince remained in Russia until the middle of November as the guest of the Czar, who treated his German visitors with great distinction.

On his return to Berlin the Crown Prince found some useful work awaiting him. An International Exhibition was projected in Paris for the following year, and he was called upon to preside at the consultations at the Ministry of Commerce with reference to the question of sending exhibits to Paris.

According to Rothan's work, 'L'Affaire du Luxembourg' (p. 92), when the cession of Luxemburg to France was first mooted (early in December, 1866), the Crown Prince questioned Bismarck upon the subject of the rumour of an alliance between Prussia and

France, and made the inquiry : 'Against whom is it directed ? I am not aware that either Austria or Russia is in a position to threaten us.' Bismarck's reply is not known, but at the end of February or the beginning of March, 1867, he remarked to Benedetti that he was glad to be able to report that the Crown Prince was beginning to realize that the only means of averting war and risking the gains of 1866 consisted in an arrangement with France.

At this period certain officers of high rank considered a war with France to be inevitable ; and that, if it were not undertaken at once by Prussia, it would be forced upon her in a few years' time, after Napoleon had completed his preparations, when her chances would be less favourable. Count Bismarck did not share this view. 'Every year,' he said, 'that is won for peace increases the prospect of its lasting maintenance, and lessens the actual danger of war.' The Crown Prince shared the Minister-President's view.

A remarkable observation of the Crown Prince on the subject of war, made in May, 1868, has been reported by Professor Blüntschi, as follows :

'You have not seen war ! If you had seen it, you would not utter the word so calmly. I have had experience of war, and I must tell you that it is the greatest of all duties to avoid war whenever possible.'

The following interesting letter was written about this time by the Crown Prince to his cousin, the Prince of Roumania, to whom he was deeply attached. Their friendship had been greatly strengthened during the campaign against Denmark, in which Prince

Charles of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, as he then was, had acted as orderly officer to the Crown Prince :

‘BERLIN,

‘January 27, 1867.

‘To-morrow your brother is passing through here on his way to you, and I seize the opportunity of writing to you after so long a silence. First I must thank you most heartily for the kind and friendly letters that reached me in the most sublime and at the same time the most tragic moments of my life—at the grave of my son, your godchild, and after the victories that I was enabled to gain! . . . There is no grief to be compared with that of seeing one’s own child fading away and sinking into the grave. One would gladly give one’s own life to save that which owes its existence to one’s self. To know that one’s child is in the grave is a thought which we mortals cannot realize until we stand before the tomb itself in all its horrible reality. Such experiences rob life of all charm that still remained to it, and only the thought of duty gives one courage to go on living.

‘Forgive these wanderings, but I assure you that when I think of my dead boy I ask myself, and so does Victoria, how it is possible after such a loss to bear the burden of everyday life. God helps us on, and allows time to blunt the sharpest pangs, though the grief remains unchanged. . . .

‘You can imagine, dear Charles, how I missed you during the campaign. Leopold was a welcome substitute, and had the opportunity of seeing war at first hand ; he was a great comfort to me in the days when I had to struggle between my grief and the most

important decisions. The experiences that you and I gained in 1864 were of the greatest help to me, and not less so was the advice of men like Blumenthal and Stosch, for whom I have the greatest esteem. Both of them will do great things for the army, if they are rightfully employed. My army corps were the greatest help that I could have wished for, as the good sense natural to our countrymen, combined with the training given by our officers, proves that Prussia is a nation in arms in the best sense of the word. Steinmetz was the right man in the right place at Nachod and Skalitz, and poor Mutius did wonders at Königgrätz. The Guard Corps had good leaders, and every man in it fought splendidly.'

The political reorganization of the country rendered reforms and new arrangements of various kinds indispensable. Here we find the Crown Prince eagerly following the current of affairs, and seeking information from every available source, by means either of conversation with eminent politicians or requests for memoranda on the topics of the day, as well as by close study of the best available political periodicals.

Among the men whose opinion was valued by the Crown Prince, Count Bethusy-Huc, an able politician imbued with strong patriotism, took a leading position. Inclining more to the Right than to the Left, Bethusy was neither a reactionary nor yet a dogmatic Liberal. The Crown Prince expressed a desire to learn his views regarding the course to be pursued by Prussia, after the establishment of the North German Confederation, and whether the policy initiated by Bismarck met with general approval.

In complying with this request, Count Bethusy drew up a lengthy memorandum, handed to the Prince on February 25, 1867, which is one of the soundest pieces of work penned by that expert political writer. This document, rendered still more forcible by the verbal explanations of the author, exerted a powerful influence on the Crown Prince, and caused him to come round more and more to his father's, or rather Bismarck's, policy, and to abandon all opposition to the men who had achieved victory along the whole line. The leading arguments adduced by Bethusy were briefly: The unity of Germany was desired by the German nation and the Hohenzollerns, but was opposed by all German Cabinets, Court Chamberlains and Court tradesmen, as well as by every foreign nation and Government. Since power must precede unity, and unity liberty, the first step towards the aims of Germany must be the introduction of universal service, so abhorrent to the supporters of 'particularism.' To reap the full benefit of this increase of strength, the Parliament must sanction the normal military expenditure for a term of five, or at the least three, years. After considering the objects to be aimed at in legislating for communal administration, the judicature, and the commercial interests of Prussia with political liberty for all creeds, Count Bethusy turned to the men in whose hands the policy of Prussia had been placed.

Admitting that Count Bismarck was 'perfectly unprincipled in the usual political sense of the word,' he added that for all that the Minister-President adhered strictly to the one cardinal principle—to make Prussia the greatest and strongest power in Germany, which

involved the converse of effecting the unity of Germany through Prussia. Bismarck's apparent delight in political strife and his unique ability to draw advantage from disadvantageous situations often led him to irritate his opponents by openly showing his contempt of their idealistic tendencies. Bismarck's influence on the King was greatly overrated, for though the latter was easily deterred, he could only be persuaded to take action by the greatest efforts—at times not at all. The subtle and ever-changing views of his Minister, who had gained his position only at a time of the direst need, were naturally antipathetic to his simple and straightforward nature.

Bismarck, the hero of the Conservatives, was now forced to requite their services with concessions which rendered a *rapprochement* with the Liberals daily more difficult. Isolated in the present time and without prospect of support in the future, Bismarck would be forced to abandon his great ideal for the sake of ephemeral success. His most effective support would be the Crown Prince of Prussia, who, after convincing himself that Bismarck had the same object in view, could hold the balance now trembling between the ideal and the practical. Supported by that tower of strength in the present, and a still more powerful one in the future, the Minister-President would be able to devote himself whole-hearted to the realisation of his farseeing plans.

‘The future of the Crown Prince is the future of Prussia and Germany. The Crown Prince is not merely the Heir Apparent; he is also a Hohenzoller, he is a Prussian. It is in this capacity that the Fatherland even now expects him to employ all his energies.

‘The Crown Prince has joyfully risked his life for the Fatherland. If he considers it of any service, he will as gladly sacrifice himself daily and hourly to such labours.’

In the meantime, on February 24, the Constituent Parliament was opened at Berlin, to frame a Constitution for the North German Confederation. The Government had the difficult task of settling a multitude of details with the Parliament. The debates on the responsibility of Ministers, universal suffrage, the creation of an Upper House, the duration of the sessions, and the payment of members, were hotly contested, while the discussions on military matters and the finances of the Confederation lasted for weeks.

Finally, on April 17 Bismarck was able to announce the acceptance of the draft by the Federated Governments, whilst the dangers arising from the Luxemburg dispute were set aside by the mediation of the Great Powers, who guaranteed the neutrality of Luxemburg in return for the withdrawal of the Prussian garrison and the razing of the fortifications.

The Crown Prince had taken a warm interest in the participation of the German industries at the International Exhibition at Paris, and in his capacity as President of the Prussian Committee he decided to visit the French capital, though no doubt political considerations also had some influence on this decision: after the peaceable settlement of the Luxemburg affair, a visit of the Crown Prince of Prussia to the Imperial Court could only tend to promote friendly relations between the two countries.

Although the Crown Prince and his consort travelled



incognito, the Emperor sent his aide-de-camp, General Count Reille, to meet them on their arrival in Paris on May 24. At noon the following day the royal guests drove in state to the Tuileries, where they were cordially welcomed by the Emperor and Empress, who gave a state banquet in their honour in the evening.

The Crown Prince and Princess were present at the races in the Bois de Boulogne, and afterwards at the performance at the Comédie Française in the evening. After receiving the return visit of the Emperor and Empress on the 28th, the royal couple attended a ball given by Prince Metternich at the Austrian Embassy. The daily intercourse with the Imperial Family was of a very cordial and friendly character.

Among the eminent persons who had the honour of being presented to the Crown Prince and Princess was Ernest Renan, the author of the 'Vie de Jésus.' Renan was invited to visit them at the Prussian Embassy, where he discussed questions of philosophy, metaphysics and literature with the Crown Princess and her consort. The French savant spoke of her afterwards as a 'very remarkable woman.'

Under the influence of the cordial welcome extended to him, the Crown Prince succeeded in persuading his father to join him in Paris. Attended by Count Bismarck, the King reached the French capital on June 5, having been met at Compiègne by the Crown Prince.

On the following day a grand review took place in the Bois de Boulogne in honour of the Prussian royalties and the Czar of Russia. As the Crown Princess quitted Paris on the 7th, the Prince joined

his father at the Tuileries, and accompanied the Imperial Court to Fontainebleau on June 11, after attending a magnificent fête given in their honour at the Hôtel de Ville.

The Crown Prince made good use of his visit by thoroughly acquainting himself with every section of the Exhibition, and by inspecting the great public institutions of the capital. The impression he made on the Parisians was very favourable, and added to the reputation he already enjoyed as a successful commander in the late war with Austria. The visit came to an end on June 14, when the King and his son returned to Prussia.

In the autumn of 1867 the Province of East Prussia suffered severely owing to the failure of the crops and the scarcity of employment. The relief works authorized by the Government were supplemented by the foundation of a relief society at the instigation of the Crown Prince, with whose active help the society did much to improve the situation of the unfortunate inhabitants, by procuring light work for the women and children as well as for the less able-bodied men.

On February 10, 1868, another son was born to the Crown Prince and Princess, and received the names of Joachim Friedrich Ernst Waldemar.

An observation of Count Bismarck to Professor Blüntschi about this time (April, 1868) gives ample evidence of the value of the Crown Prince's attitude at that critical period in deciding not only the fate of Prussia, but of Germany as well. It ran thus :

‘At the time of the suggestion of an indemnity for the Government without a Budget after the 1866 campaign, the question of restoring absolutism again

cropped up. I personally am not a supporter of any constitutional system, and I told them so.\* “Prussia can be governed by absolutism, and she attained her greatness under absolutism. But it is impracticable to rule now this way, now that way. The State cannot flourish if it wavers between two systems. Have you obtained the consent of the Crown Prince to the reintroduction of an absolutist régime? If not, we must not abandon the path of the Constitution and return to absolutism, for the latter would only prevail until the accession of the Crown Prince.” This consideration proved decisive, as they knew that the Crown Prince would never consent.’

In the spring of 1868 the Crown Prince formed the plan of returning the visit paid to the Prussian Court in 1867 by the Italian Heir-Apparent, Prince Humbert.

The conduct of the correspondence between the respective Cabinets was entrusted to the Prussian Under-Secretary of State, Herr von Thiele, who had from the first supported the idea as being one likely to produce favourable political results. Count Bismarck was also impressed with the advantages of a closer connection with the Italian Court, and found no difficulty in obtaining King William’s consent.

In reply to Thiele’s inquiry about the feeling of the Italian Court and Government towards the proposed visit, Count Usedom, the Prussian Ambassador in Florence, was able to state that the visit would be received with great pleasure. No sooner had Count Menabrea, the Minister-President, mentioned the subject to King Victor Emmanuel than the latter

\* A deputation of the Conservative party met Bismarck at Prague on the termination of the war with Austria.

even at that time his abilities were doubted less than his sincerity and good faith. Since then he has not only opposed Prussian policy in speeches and pamphlets, but has endeavoured to rouse suspicion against it by calumnies. Your Royal Highness will remember a speech he made last year, as well as his published address to his constituents in Biella not long ago. I take the liberty of humbly enclosing two pamphlets of recent date, which, although not bearing his signature, have been published under his directions, and a copy of the report with which Count Usedom forwarded them, as a glance at these will be of interest to your Royal Highness at the present moment. In all these publications a *rapprochement* with France, in opposition to a closer alliance with Prussia, is represented as the only safe course for Italy; and there can be no doubt that public opinion is correct in ascribing to General La Marmora the intention, should he ever again stand at the head of a Ministry, of directing Francophile policy, and of taking an active part in a possible conflict with Prussia. From the French point of view, the re-entrance of La Marmora into power in place of Menabrea is therefore both desired and favoured.

‘As it is assuredly in the interest of Prussia to prevent this, we shall find our best support in public opinion and the sympathies of the Italian nation, which assert themselves both within and without the Chambers in an energetic fashion.

‘General La Marmora himself appears to feel the weight of this same public opinion, and to realize that therein lies the chief hindrance to his re-entrance into power. He therefore desires to have it believed that he

is not an *unconditional* opponent of Prussia, and in certain circumstances would even be in a position to enter into connection with our country. Hence the endeavours referred to by Count Usedom, to feign good relations with the highly placed personages in Berlin, and to represent himself as a *persona ingrata* only to the present Ministry of Prussia. These attempts are transparent enough to be recognised—at least, here—not as a conversion, but as a temporary manœuvre to influence public opinion.

‘A gracious reception of the General by your Royal Highness would promote the success of this manœuvre with the public, and hence further his prospects; I trust I may take it for granted that your Royal Highness will avoid this. The prospect of winning a former opponent by kindness seems delusive, even should personal motives have contributed to his antagonism, owing, it is said, to his disappointment of the expected Order (the Black Eagle). I am not in a position to decide whether this has any foundation; it would only be an act of weakness to make good anything of the kind *now*.

‘The history of former Cabinets in Florence shows clearly how powerful public opinion in Italy still is. After the forced resignation of the Ricasoli Ministry, which had very pronounced sympathies with Prussia, and tended to render Italian policy independent of France by means of a closer connection with us, a French policy was universally anticipated from the Ratazzi Ministry; nevertheless, they, too, were very soon drawn into the national current, though through exaggeration in this direction they were swept away, and fell, to a certain extent, victims to this policy.

The course of the present Ministry is very similar, only that it proceeds with less vehemence. Having secured Ratazzi's position through French influence, they are again subject to the same necessity of doing justice to the national sympathies by seeking the friendship of Prussia. The attitude hitherto observed by the Cabinet gives us no reason to question its good will, or to recognise any advantage that we might gain by its fall. This development certainly seems to show that direct action contrary to these national sympathies, and the return to a Francophile policy, would only be possible by means of French violence and by a *coup d'état*. La Marmora is the right man for such a scheme, and his candidature would be regarded as involving this course.

‘Your Royal Highness will allow me humbly to remark that while the confirmation and revival of the national sympathies is an important object of your journey in the eyes of His Majesty the King, yet there would be objections to detailed discussions of the *future* and the impending development of the political position, or remarks upon the subject of the attitude of Prussia, beyond a general assurance of goodwill.

‘With deepest respect, I remain,

‘Your Royal Highness's most humble servant,

‘VON BISMARCK.’

On April 16 the Crown Prince started on his journey to Italy. On his arrival in Munich the following day he was greeted with a demonstrative reception at the railway-station amid the loud cheers of the crowd. Prince Otto of Bavaria and the highest

officials were present to welcome him, as the King was prevented by indisposition from leaving the castle. Louis II. was, however, able to receive the Crown Prince on several occasions.

The Crown Prince had several conversations with Prince Hohenlohe, then President of the Bavarian Ministry, before continuing his journey on the evening of the 18th.

In a series of long letters to his father, the Crown Prince described the magnificent reception accorded to him by the Italian nation at every halt on his journey. Wherever the Prince or any of his suite appeared, they were greeted with enthusiastic cries of '*Evviva Prussia!*' '*Evviva Prussia, l'angelo protettore d'Italia!*' and the like. The Italian troops naturally attracted the Prince's attention. But whilst the Bersaglieri, with their picturesque, semi-Garibaldian uniform, the well-horsed cavalry and artillery, evoked his favourable comment, he was obliged to confess that the army as a whole, like other institutions of the State, was still more or less immature, and that years must elapse before the standard aimed at by the King of Italy could be attained. He was particularly struck with the great esteem in which the artillery was held, since nearly all the Generals and royal aides-de-camp were selected from that branch of the service. The Crown Prince was delighted to observe that even in the hospitals and the arrangements for tending the wounded the Italians were inclined to follow the Prussian rather than the French model.

In an article describing the Crown Prince's reception at Turin, a writer in the French newspaper *Le Monde* quoted a remark of a Turin journal, to the



effect that no such enthusiasm had been witnessed in Turin since the arrival of the first French battalions in 1859. It then continued: 'I call that good luck. This one Prince is as much to the people of Turin as all the soldiers and money of France, and as the crown which the French presented to Victor Emmanuel on the point of their bayonets. Lucky Prince of Prussia!'

The following accounts are taken from other Continental newspapers:

'On his arrival at Turin, the Prince of Prussia embraced Prince Humbert and his brother with marked fervour, and seems to have made a strong impression upon the people of Turin. The Prince is a fine-looking man, tall and well made, with a martial air. He smiles almost constantly, and meets with ovations wherever he goes.'

'This morning the Crown Prince of Prussia visited some of our military establishments. The Prince is much liked by our soldiers, who speak with pleasure of the interest displayed by His Royal Highness in all that concerns the minutest details of the military service. A subject of general pleasure is the extreme politeness and the amiable courtesy shown by Prince Frederick William during the journey from Verona to Turin. In every garrison town a detachment was sent to the station to pay military honours to the Prince. In spite of the rain, His Royal Highness always alighted at every station, to pass along the line of troops and personally thank the officers.'

The political importance ascribed to the Crown Prince's visit by the Italian nation is expressed in an article of the *Riforma* of April 23, 1868, which

reports that from every quarter the inhabitants hastened with spontaneous enthusiasm from Verona to Turin to welcome the Crown Prince of Prussia, whilst the other guest, the French Prince, landed in silence at Genoa, and arrived in silence at Turin, so that no one knew of his presence except those who were bound to greet him by ties of duty or relationship. In this contrast lay a lesson, a sign and a warning. The feeling that the French alliance, as interpreted by the policy of the 'heir of Mentana,' was now but a shameful servitude had penetrated all classes of the population of Italy, and this explained the cold reception of the Prince, who still represented the Liberal policy. The welcome given to the Crown Prince was not only an act of gratitude to the leader of the war which gave Venice to Italy, but also a proof that the conscience of the Italian people would always decline to consent to a new proposal of alliance to the injury of the prospects of German unity—a proposal aiming at a conquest which had nothing to do with Italy, and the object of which was a preponderance of power which was as injurious to the liberty of Italy as to that of other nations. The Italian people had instinctively hastened to greet in the hero of Sadowa the probable opponent of an intolerable and redoubtable enemy.

The ovations which the Crown Prince had received made some impression at the Court of the Tuileries. It is said that Prince Jerome Napoleon wrote at once to his imperial cousin from Turin, pointing out the necessity of entering upon a different policy with regard to the Roman question.

In a conversation which took place between Count

Bismarck and Professor Blüntscli on April 30, 1868, at Berlin, the former referred as follows to the Crown Prince's Italian visit :

‘The Crown Prince’s reception in Italy has surprised nobody except the Crown Prince himself. The King sent him there, because we knew that he would be enthusiastically received, and because we wished to prevent a La Marmora Ministry. Our aim has been achieved. A Ministry hostile to us is no longer possible.’

There was but one opinion concerning the tactful reserve maintained by the Crown Prince in reply to the demonstrations of the Italian population. At the tournament at Turin he was the hero of the crowd, whose cheers were for him exclusively, though he very properly ignored this fact in the presence of the Royal Family. A similar occurrence took place at the Pergola Theatre in Florence on the evening of May 1. The Bolognese too wished to celebrate the presence of the Crown Prince by festivities, which he declined. In short, during the whole time of his visit he kept himself continually in the background, without showing that he was aware of being the chief object of interest to the people.

It was the subject of great annoyance at the Vatican that the Crown Prince abandoned the idea of going from Florence to Rome, to visit the Pope. The Crown Prince, however, was of opinion that a journey to Rome would spoil the whole effect of his visit, in consideration of the incessant and cordial manifestations of the Italian enthusiasm for Prussia ; he laid stress upon this in a telegram to his august father.

In recognition of the achievements of the Crown

Prince in the Austrian campaign, King Victor Emmanuel conferred upon him the Grand Cross of the Military Order of Merit of Savoy.

The following amusing incident may be related in conclusion :

Princess Margherita was dancing at a Court ball with the son of the banker Cassano, who accidentally trod upon and tore the trimming of the Princess's dress, to the great excitement of the embarrassed Ladies-in-Waiting. The Crown Prince of Prussia drew a little case from his coat pocket, slipped off an elastic band, took out a small pair of scissors, and, kneeling down on one knee, cut off the strip of torn trimming. When the Princess held out her hand to take the fragment of lace, the Prince, to the general surprise, stood up, pressed the precious relic to his heart, and then methodically folded it up and put it in his coat pocket. 'He is a true knight!' was the murmur among the onlookers.

In reference to this incident, the *Stuttgart Beobachter* remarked at the time: 'These Prussians are sharp fellows, always armed, and ready for everything.'

The following extracts from letters by the Crown Prince to the Prince of Roumania were written about this time :

'BERLIN,

'April 15, 1868.

'I send you these lines on the eve of starting for Italy to be present at the wedding of the Crown Prince. . . .

'In politics everything seems in confusion; yet nobody wishes for war, and as long as Napoleon can

keep his fire-eaters in order we shall probably be spared it. Many people think that in time the burden of military expenses here in Germany will result in fresh conflicts, which will be as serious as those in Prussia of 1859-63. But I have confidence in the good sense and experience which we have gained during the last few years. May God guide our destiny in peace to the union of the entire German Fatherland! . . .'

'POTSDAM, NEW PALACE,

'September 21, 1868.

' . . . My Italian visit, of which, by the way, the papers for once gave a correct account, was a great success. I do not suppose that any German, as representative of his nation in Italy, ever before received such an ovation as the Italians gave me this year, to show their gratitude for our work of union; I returned highly delighted with my visit, during which I became great friends with Victor Emmanuel personally. Italy has a future before her, if she remains in good hands. The Crown Princess is in every way adapted to play an important part in this respect.'

The Crown Prince left Florence on May 8, and on his way home paid a short visit to the Grand-Ducal Court at Darmstadt. In reference to this the Grand-Duchess Alice wrote to her mother, Queen Victoria, on May 14, 1868 :

'Fritz spent a few hours with us on his way back from Italy, and had much to tell us of his journey. He has heard the most extraordinary reports that

France intends to open hostilities against Germany quite suddenly, and he asked me what you thought about the probability of a war this summer.'

In the summer of 1869 the Khedive of Egypt invited the King, the Crown Prince and Princess, and Count Bismarck, to attend the ceremony of the opening of the Suez Canal. His Majesty felt obliged to decline the invitation on account of his age and of the fatigues of the journey. Count Bismarck also excused himself on the grounds of his official duties. In regard to the invitation to the Crown Prince, the King referred the question to Count Bismarck. The King on his part hesitated, partly on account of the great expense which the acceptance would entail. Count Bismarck overcame these scruples, representing the political effect from a visit of the Crown Prince *en route* to the Emperor of Austria.

A notification was accordingly sent by telegram to Vienna, that the Crown Prince, in accepting the invitation of the Khedive to attend the ceremony of the opening of the Suez Canal, would visit the Emperor and the Imperial Family at Vienna, if it should be agreeable to His Imperial Majesty.

A reply was immediately sent by the Emperor that it would give him much pleasure to receive the visit of the Crown Prince.\*

The Crown Prince accordingly started on his journey on October 3, accompanied by the Grand-Duke Louis of Hesse, the husband of Princess Alice of Great Britain.

He first went to Vienna, the object of this visit

\* 'The Diplomatic Reminiscences of Lord Augustus Loftus, 1862-1879,' vol. i., p. 253 *et seq.* London, 1894.

being a renewal of friendly relations between the two Courts after the events of 1866. After passing several pleasant days in that city as the Emperor's guest, he travelled by way of Venice, Ravenna, and Brindisi to the island of Corfu, where he spent his birthday. From thence he sailed along the coast of Albania to Corinth, and arrived at Athens on October 20. On board the ship *Hertha* he crossed the Ægean Sea two days later, making an excursion to the site of Troy, passed the Dardanelles and the Sea of Marmora, and arrived at Constantinople on the morning of October 24. The Sultan placed at his disposal a palace situated on the Asiatic shore, and at his request ceded the site of the ruined Convent of St. John at Jerusalem to the King of Prussia, for the purpose of erecting a German Protestant church.

On October 29 the Crown Prince left Constantinople, and reached Jaffa on November 3. After visiting the settlement of the 'Jerusalem Friends,' he set out for Jerusalem, accompanied by a cavalry escort and thirty marines of the German squadron; the night was passed at Bab-el-Wady.

At sunrise next day the long procession of riders and beasts of burden continued their journey; at the village of Kolonieh the Crown Prince was received by the German colony of Jerusalem; the nearer he approached to the city, the greater became the concourse of people. Greek and Abyssinian monks came to pay homage to him, while the spiritual and temporal authorities, both Christian and Mohammedan, were presented to him. The towers of Jerusalem and other buildings now became visible. On arriving at the Jaffa Gate, he turned in a north-easterly direction to



the Damascus Gate, through which only the Sultan and his representatives are allowed to pass, and made his entry into Jerusalem. Dismounting near the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, he was received by the clergy and conducted to the sacred spots. He carried away a quantity of flowers from the church, to give, as he said, 'to his wife.'

The Crown Prince devoted the whole day to visiting churches and other sacred places, and shortly before sunset repaired to the Mount of Olives, where he ascended the minaret of the mosque, which affords a glorious view over the whole city.

About nine o'clock the whole German community assembled in the Consular Building and presented an address. In his reply the Crown Prince said that 'if everyone would labour industriously in his own sphere, with the help of God, the great aim would be accomplished, and German energy would achieve what was necessary for the good of the Fatherland.'

The Crown Prince rode to Hebron, where he inspected the graves of the patriarchs, the mountain reservoirs of King Solomon, Bethany, and some other places of interest in Jerusalem on November 5 and 6. The following Sunday, after a solemn service in the Christ Church, where the Prince received Holy Communion, possession was formally taken of the ruins of the former Church of the Knights of St. John. The Governor of the city handed the Prince the keys, whereupon the latter gave orders to fasten the Arms of Prussia to the wooden entrance gate. After this had been done the Prince advanced, bared his head, and spoke in a clear voice :

'In the name of His Majesty the King, I hereby

take possession of the ancient Church of the Knights of St. John, and of all ruins and other remains of the same both above and below ground. Three cheers for His Majesty the King !'

The Prince then mounted the largest heap of ruins in the inner space, where a small table was placed, upon which lay the deed of cession, and signed it, Consul-General von Alten and the Pasha following his example. After the completion of the ceremony and a walk round the ruins, he returned to the Consulate. About three o'clock the Crown Prince took leave and rode to Jaffa, to take ship for Beyrout, where he explored the mountains and valleys of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, before reaching Damascus on November 11. Three days later he returned to Beyrout, and on the 15th he travelled to Port Said, the starting-point of the procession through the Suez Canal, and there met the Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria-Hungary, the Empress Eugénie of France, Prince Henry of the Netherlands, and the Khedive of Egypt.

On November 16 the religious ceremony of consecrating the Suez Canal took place, followed next day by the formal opening. The Khedive led the van, after him the Empress Eugénie, then the Emperor of Austria, the Crown Prince of Prussia, and the Prince of the Netherlands, each on a separate ship with his own suite, followed by many other vessels. Ismailia was reached on the first day, and Suez on the second.

After taking train to Cairo, the Crown Prince started on a voyage up the Nile as far as the First Cataract, accompanied by his suite, now augmented by Professors Lepsius and Dümichen. On November 25

the Crown Prince landed in Upper Egypt, visited the ruins of Luxor and Karnak in the plain of Thebes, and on the 27th sailed as far as the First Cataract. Here the whole party mounted camels and rode through the desert. The Nile island of Philæ and the ruins upon it were visited the following day.

The Crown Prince returned to Cairo on December 3, where he laid the foundation-stone of an Evangelical church and ascended the Great Pyramid of Gizeh. After a short stay at the Egyptian capital he proceeded to Alexandria and embarked on his homeward voyage.

After a stormy passage to Naples the Crown Prince received news from Cannes, where his family was staying, that the Crown Princess was unable to meet him on account of the illness of Prince Waldemar, and the Prince therefore rejoined his family at Cannes.

On December 26 he travelled to Paris, and again met with a very cordial reception by the Emperor Napoleon III. and the Empress Eugénie.

After an absence of nearly three months, the Crown Prince returned to Potsdam on the last day of 1869.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE CROWN PRINCE IN THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR

1870—1871

THE beginning of the year 1870 afforded no visible premonitory indication of the tremendous events which were destined so soon to convulse the Continent of Europe. The proposed candidature of the Hohen-zollern Prince for the throne of Spain—already confidentially mooted and declined in the previous year—was known to very few. Nor did it occur to those who were in the secret that the project might possibly crop up again. Thus, to all outward appearances, everything pointed to peace, and, as if to emphasize the serene aspect of affairs, the Crown Prince in the month of March attended the centenary meeting of the Masonic Lodge, so-called *Zur Liebe und Treue*, at Stettin. Far from all expectation of an approaching harvest of death, public opinion in Prussia was occupied with the project of preserving the life of malefactors by abolishing the death penalty, at least for political offences—a proposal brought forward in the North German Parliament in the month of April, with the hearty support of the Crown Prince, who at

all times strenuously opposed the infliction of the death penalty.

A third daughter was born to the royal couple on June 14, and received the name of Sophe. The Kings of Bavaria and Württemberg stood godfathers to the child, whose baptism took place on July 24, when war had already been declared between France and Prussia, and the Crown Prince was on the point of leaving his family to take his share in the struggle.

The Crown Prince was appointed to the command of the Third Army, composed of the 5th and 11th Prussian, the 1st and 2nd Bavarian Corps, the Baden and Württemberg Divisions, and the 4th Cavalry Division—in all 128 battalions, 102 squadrons, and 80 batteries. Nearly every race of Teuton blood was represented in the Prince's command, from Pomeranians to Bavarians, and so gave emphatic expression to the political tendency of the war—the fusion of North and South Germany. The marked satisfaction of the Crown Prince at being placed at the head of the Southern contingents was soon repaid by the undying devotion of those who had been his opponents but four years before.

‘I cannot deny,’ writes Field-Marshal von Blumenthal,\* then Chief of the Prince's Staff, ‘that I was somewhat anxious about the mood in which I should find the Crown Prince, since his well-known love of peace would probably not send him to the war with as light a heart as the remainder of us so-called “men-at-arms.”’ Great, therefore, was my joy at being

\* These personal reminiscences of Count Blumenthal, as well as those preceding them, were written expressly for the use of the present work.

received in his usual kind, quiet manner—nay, heartily—with strong confidence in a successful termination of the unavoidable campaign. No superfluous conversation took place as to whether the war might perhaps have been put off, and we only discussed what was to be done to develop the whole strength of Germany to its fullest extent.’

The Crown Prince attended church on July 25 for the last time before leaving for the seat of war, and partook of the Holy Communion with the Crown Princess. The next morning found him far from Berlin, which he quitted without saying farewell to his wife, in order that she might be spared the grief of parting. At Munich, Stuttgart and Karlsruhe Princes and people greeted the Commander of the Third Army with such enthusiasm that no doubt existed any longer of their devotion to the national cause of Germany.

In addressing the officers of the Ingolstadt garrison, the Prince said: ‘I cannot tell you how honoured I feel at being entrusted with the command of the Bavarian Army by your King. We must not conceal from ourselves that we are entering upon a difficult campaign, but the universal enthusiasm in every part of Germany permits me to hope that, with God’s assistance, it will be crowned with victory, and lead in the end to a peace that will bring happiness to the German Empire. Let us rely also on our proven rights and—our good swords.’

The Third Army advanced from its cantonments round Landau on August 4, and soon became engaged with the enemy posted at Weissenburg. ‘The struggle,’ writes Count Blumenthal, ‘was very severe, as the

enemy fought with great bravery, and did not abandon Weissenburg and the Gaisberg until after 2 p.m., when they retreated before superior forces. As soon as the Crown Prince reached the Gaisberg, to congratulate his brave and victorious troops, he ordered the divisional cavalry of the 11th Corps to pursue at once in the direction of Sulz. Great was the enthusiasm and joy of the soldiers at their first victory.'

On the battlefield the band of the King's Regiment played *Lobe den Herrn, den mächtigen König der Ehren*, to which the Prince listened with folded hands. As soon as the hymn was finished, he stepped forward and said: 'That was well done, my dear bandmaster; we owe the deepest gratitude to the Almighty for to-day.'

The Third Army was now to concentrate in rear of the river Sauer, fronting westwards, prior to resuming the offensive against the strong French position at Wörth on the 7th. But, as Count Blumenthal relates, the attack took place a day too soon. 'Whilst the headquarters were still enjoying a well-earned rest on the morning of the 6th, the Crown Prince entered my room suddenly, and told me that he had heard cannon-shots, apparently from the direction of the Sauer, adding that we ought to ride there at once. But since I believed that only minor encounters were taking place with the enemy close at hand, and that reports must be awaited, the Crown Prince only ordered our horses to be saddled in readiness, whilst we waited for news. The 5th and 2nd Bavarian Corps were directed, if in any way possible, to avoid or break off any unnecessary actions, in order to gain time for



the other corps to come up. But as the thunder of the guns increased considerably about 11 a.m., and no doubt could be entertained regarding the magnitude of the engagement, we mounted and galloped through Preusdorf to the Sauer, near Wörth. Finding the battle already in full swing, the Crown Prince took up his position on a height east of Wörth, from whence a good portion of the battlefield was visible, whilst orders and directions for the troops would suffer the least delay. The Crown Prince soon realized that the hostile position at Elsasshausen and Froschweiler was very strong, and barely capable of being forced, and that it could only be taken by energetic pressure on the flanks, and by threatening the line of retreat. Quietly, almost nonchalantly, he remarked that even the last man must be staked to gain the heights, and then sent his orders in all directions.

‘The ensuing long and costly struggle, in which both sides fought with unparalleled determination and contempt of death, ended after 5 p.m. with the capture of Froschweiler and the headlong flight of the enemy. The Crown Prince congratulated and thanked his brave troops and their leaders on the battlefield by the light of the burning village, and gave orders for the pursuit in the general direction of Reichshofen. It is impossible to realize the enthusiasm and joyful excitement of the troops at the sight of their beloved commander, and from this day forward he was called “Our Fritz” everywhere ; the bond of union with our South German comrades was henceforth firm and unbreakable. Whilst bullets were still whistling overhead, *Heil dir im Sieger Kranz* and the *Wacht am Rhein* were sung amid cheering.’

On reaching the 58th Regiment, the Prince halted and, calling to the front Lieutenant Baron, who had carried the colours at the assault of the Weissenburg cemetery, said to him : 'I have caused a special report to be made about you ; but, my children, I do not know how to reward you. Gentlemen,' exclaimed the Prince, turning to his suite, 'this is the standard-bearer of Weissenburg !' Then, with the words, 'In the name of my father, I thank you again for your heroic deed,' he bent down and embraced the young officer.

The Crown Prince then paid a visit to the French General Raoult, who lay dangerously wounded at Reichshofen, and inquired sympathetically whether anything could be done for him. Major Duhoussel had carried his wounded chief out of the thick of the battle, for which act of bravery the Crown Prince set him free with the words : 'I give you your liberty in recognition of your gallant conduct.'

During the evening the Prince observed to Gustav Freytag, who accompanied the headquarters : 'I detest this butchery. I have never longed for war laurels, and would willingly have left such fame to others without envying them. Yet it is just my fate to be led from one war to another, and from battlefield to battlefield, before I ascend the throne of my ancestors. It is a hard lot.'

The feeling of the Third Army is well described by the Chief of the Staff : 'The great importance of the brilliant victories gained in the first two battles to the future course of the campaign, to the King and the Fatherland, was felt by us all ; but still nearer to our hearts lay the thought of what we might further

achieve under so sure and proved a commander. In a few days the Prince had become the idol of his army. Assurance and unconditional mutual confidence inspired as with an electric spark the army which had just been formed from the most varied elements, and henceforward no task seemed too difficult for it. The Crown Prince's rare talent of trusting his subordinates and showing that he trusted them reaped gratitude and devotion, and the less he interfered in details, and left these entirely to his excellent corps commanders, the more certain was he that everyone endeavoured to please him, and to act in accordance with his intentions. From this time onward one might say of the army, "Union is strength." The Crown Prince also had visibly gained self-confidence in the first successful days of the campaign, and often remarked to me that he hoped that he, with his army, would be employed in executing independent operations in the future as well.'

But this hope was doomed to disappointment, as the orders issued by the royal headquarters for the further advance practically put an end to the independent operations of the Third Army. The Crown Prince was directed to continue his march to the line of the Moselle, through Saarburg, Blâmont and Lunéville, to Nancy. On the 17th a messenger arrived from the King inviting the Crown Prince to be present at an impending decisive battle near Metz. Though the temptation to accept was most inviting, the Prince sent word to His Majesty that he could not leave his troops at so critical a moment. But when Major von Hahnke arrived early on the 19th with the news of the glorious victory achieved on the 18th, the Crown

Prince was no longer bound by such considerations, and drove to Pont à Mousson to congratulate his father.

In the meantime the whereabouts of MacMahon's force caused great anxiety, and it was not until August 25 that the cavalry were able to report the enemy's movement to the north-east, apparently to relieve Bazaine. At an interview at Bar le Duc, the King left the Commander of the Third Army to decide whether he would continue the march on Paris or move north at once. Without hesitation the Prince decided on the latter course, and was thus able to take a prominent part in the great battle.

'Very shortly after our arrival at Chémery, on August 31,' writes Field-Marshal von Blumenthal, 'General von Moltke came over to discuss the situation with the Crown Prince. On entering my room he rubbed his hands, and said with a sarcastic smile: "Now we have got them into a mouse-trap." We were all in the highest spirits that day. . . .

'About 4 a.m. the Crown Prince and I followed the advancing troops in our carriage as far as Donchery, where we climbed up a hill of considerable height on the left bank of the Meuse, expecting to obtain a view over the greater part of the battlefield. For a time, however, we were disappointed by a dense mist, though it eventually sank lower and lower until we could see over it. The Crown Prince had despatched staff officers in various directions to send or bring in reports, so that on the whole we were well posted as to the course of the battle. As the combat in front of the 5th and 11th Corps increased in violence after 10 a.m., the Crown Prince became very restless, and

said to me that he could endure it no longer, that he must join his brave troops, as he could not play the part of a distant spectator. For a time I succeeded in detaining him by drawing his attention to the fact that by so doing he would deprive the Third Army of its commander, but in the end I had to give way and order the horses to be held in readiness at the foot of the hill. At this moment Major von Hahnke appeared in the nick of time with important despatches from the 5th Corps, which called for various orders and directions, and convinced the Prince that he could not leave his post for some time, at any rate.

‘From our position we were able, with the aid of a multitude of telescopes, to make a minute observation of the actions in progress. We soon recognised that the 5th and 11th Corps, as well as the Army of the Meuse, were making constant progress, and that the circle enclosing the French army was being correspondingly narrowed. By noon no doubt existed any longer but that the day was ours, and that every escape was barred to the French. On the thunder of the guns ceasing almost entirely about 4 p.m., I rode over with the Crown Prince to His Majesty, who had taken up his position for the day on a height about a mile away. Shortly afterwards a French General, Reille, rode up with a flag of truce and a letter from the Emperor Napoleon. The battle was at an end. We hastened back to Donchery in order to issue the necessary orders, and then drove to Chémery, where the troops had improvised illuminations. During the journey the Crown Prince was very quiet and reflective, owing, no doubt, to the multifarious thoughts and feelings which presented themselves, as well as to fatigue. I was

able to infer from a few remarks that he was well satisfied with his decision, arrived at in Bar le Duc, of discontinuing the advance on Paris in order to march northwards, which alone had rendered so magnificent a result possible. He also showed a lively appreciation of the efforts of the 5th and 11th Corps, who had correctly gauged their task and advanced so timely, so energetically, and so decisively.'

On the morning after the battle, the Crown Prince met the King on the Donchery road just before General von Moltke reported the result of the negotiations for the surrender of MacMahon's army. Owing to the absence of news regarding the intentions of the French commander, the King ordered the staffs of the two headquarters to rendezvous on the heights near Frènois at 11 a.m., as a bombardment might still take place. The arrival of General von Moltke half an hour later, with the capitulation duly signed and completed, prevented further bloodshed. Handing the document to General von Treschkow, the King ordered it to be read aloud, after which he briefly expressed his joy at so momentous a success achieved by the aid of the South German troops, and shook hands with the Bavarian and Württemberg Princes present.

After escorting the King to the Château of Bellevue, where the interview with Napoleon was to take place, the Crown Prince devoted the remainder of the day to an inspection of the battlefield. About 4 p.m. he reached the gate of the fortress, then guarded by Bavarian troops. A private soldier, whose gallantry in action at Wörth had been rewarded with the second class of the Iron Cross, and at Sedan with the first

class (a rare distinction for a private), was presented to the Crown Prince, who kissed him on both cheeks.

‘The Crown Prince,’ wrote a Bavarian officer, ‘is by no means inclined to treat the South Germans with undue graciousness, as if he was anxious to ingratiate himself with them. On the contrary, he has expected the utmost from them, and has not spared their commanders with his criticisms. But it is just this calm demeanour and spirit of justice that won our complete confidence; that he always led us to victory increased our feeling; his hearty and honest friendliness towards individuals did the remainder, and it is to him above all others that we owe the brotherly comradeship among the troops, and that the Bavarian likes to walk arm-in-arm with the Prussian. . . . Even the privates are devoted to him body and soul; he does not speak to them “condescendingly” or “graciously,” but with such obvious personal interest and good-fellowship that the men’s hearts leap within them.’

The Prince had an interview with Bismarck ‘either immediately before or after Sedan,’ as the Chancellor informed Moritz Busch, ‘at Beaumont or Donchery, and our conversation took place riding side by side in a long avenue. We came into sharp conflict as to what measures were possible and morally admissible, and when the Crown Prince spoke of using force and forcible means with respect to the Bavarians, I reminded him of Margrave Gero and the thirty Wendish Princes, and also of the Vespers of Sendling. But as he adhered to his opinion, I told him, though not so abruptly and plainly, that whilst a Prince might attempt to do so, a gentleman would not. It



would have been a treacherous abuse and betrayal of our allies, who had done their duty, quite apart from the unwisdom of making the attempt whilst we still required their assistance.'

A few days later, at Rheims, the Crown Prince issued the following appeal on behalf of the invalided soldiers and the dependents of those who had fallen in the national cause :

'The great victories achieved by the army have inspired the German nation with hopes for an honourable peace. On the battlefields of France the nation became conscious and proud of her grandeur and unity, which, hallowed by the blood of many thousands of our warriors, will, we are confident, exert its power of union for all ages. But a feeling of deep sadness is joined to the enthusiastic exaltation of these days. Many of the flower of our youth, many of the leaders of our army, have fallen a sacrifice to victory. Still greater is the number of those who by reason of their wounds and almost superhuman exertions will be prevented from gaining a livelihood in future by their own efforts. The dependents of the dead and the living victims of the war have a claim above all others on the gratitude of the nation. Whosoever has shared in the enthusiasm of this campaign, whosoever hopes for the commencement of a new and happy era of peace from this raising of our total national strength, whosoever humbly honours the clear judgment of God in our victory and in the defeat of our enemies, let him now show his loyalty to the warriors of our national army and to their dependents.

'The funds of the State alone, even if they can be

granted liberally in proportion, are insufficient to maintain the great number of invalids and dependents. These funds can only supply the barest necessities. They are unavoidably limited by general regulations, which cannot go into individual requirements.

‘Great efforts on the part of voluntary aid will now be necessary, since the losses of the war have been as enormous as the successes.

‘In the same way as this campaign has created one uniform German army, in which scions of every race have vied in the fraternal rivalry of valour, so let the care for the invalids and the helpless stranded by the war become a matter in common for Germany, shared equally by the North and South of our Fatherland.

‘Former experience shows that more is required than the warm-hearted contribution of money; more laborious and not less important are judicious distribution, sympathetic inquiry into personal circumstances; lastly, and most difficult, care lest assistance weakens the still remaining powers of earning instead of strengthening them, so that it may have a really healthy influence on the life of the person thus aided.

‘It is therefore desirable that local and district societies should be formed everywhere to organize collections in combination with and subordination to a general committee, also to inquire after, examine and tend the necessitous, and to continue that care for them.

‘Since the National Victoria Fund for Invalids, founded in 1866 for a similar purpose with regard to the greater part of Germany, fulfils the above conditions, and has proved successful with its arrangements, I hereby entrust the executive committee of

that fund with the organization and management of an invalid fund for Germany, and to appeal for subscriptions as well as for the foundation of branch societies.

‘His Majesty the King, Commander-in-Chief of the German Army, has empowered me, as in 1864 and 1866, to approve of such a patriotic undertaking. It has now been my happy fate to command an army in the field in which the Bavarian, the Württemberger and the Badenser fought side by side with the Prussian, and I may now appeal to the heart of every German. Let this labour of love be our common task for the Fatherland, and the introduction of many combined and beneficent works of peace.

‘FREDERICK WILLIAM,

‘Crown Prince of Prussia.

‘HEADQUARTERS, RHEIMS,

‘*September 6, 1870.*’

It was during these days which preceded the investment of Paris that the French press sought to allay the fears of the inhabitants by declaring that the Crown Prince was opposed to continuing the campaign, and had informed the King that he could not consent to a bombardment of the capital. These hopes were soon dashed to the ground by the vigorous advance of the Third Army, which reached the positions on the south front of Paris assigned to it on September 18 and 19, after a victorious action at Petit-Bicêtre by the 2nd Bavarian and 5th Prussian Corps, who took an entrenchment and seven guns at Mont la Tour.

The Crown Prince rode over to the battlefield on September 20 in order to congratulate General Hart-

mann on the victory, and then entered Versailles in triumph, where his headquarters had been transferred to the Prefecture. An enormous crowd of spectators lined the streets through which the procession passed.

Field-Marshal von Blumenthal thus describes the activity of the Crown Prince in the ensuing siege of Paris :

‘During the investment of Paris, which lasted nearly half a year, an honourable and influential position was allotted to the Crown Prince, and consequently to me as Chief of his Staff. Yet it did not correspond to the desire of the Crown Prince for independent operations in the field. He had never had a fancy for sieges, and now he foresaw he would have to lie for months in front of a fortress, whilst for the present he lacked all the essential means for bringing the siege to a successful issue. However, he conquered his aversion by the aid of his inborn devotion to duty, and sought to gain information about every circumstance of any importance, whilst making the necessary arrangements to invest the fortress completely. The troops fortified the outpost positions allotted to them with the greatest activity and energy, and in a few days they were secure against surprise. Whilst the communications of the garrison with the outer world were thus cut off, the troops quartered in rear of the outposts were able to enjoy comparative security and refresh themselves after the exertions of the campaign. The cavalry covered the army from an external attack. Most of the positions thus fortified were inspected by the Crown Prince himself, and he often seized an opportunity of expressing his approval.

‘A portion of the large rooms of the Palace of Versailles was converted into a hospital under the personal supervision of the Crown Prince. He often visited the hospitals during the siege, inspecting even the minutest details. His presence soothed the patients, and many of them seemed quite content with their lot, since it gave them an opportunity to be spoken to and consoled by their beloved leader.

‘The royal headquarters reached Versailles from Ferrières on October 5, and forthwith the position of the Crown Prince as Commander-in-Chief on the south front underwent material alteration, as their proximity involved the disadvantage that direct orders entered more into details than hitherto, thereby unavoidably placing a drag on the independent activity of the Crown Prince. He was no longer able to act independently in accordance with his own views, and in important undertakings had always to obtain the royal approval beforehand.

‘Moreover, the local conditions of Versailles were of a peculiar nature, since, owing to the presence of so many diplomats, superior officers, and German Princes with their aides-de-camp, even the most trivial affairs were discussed everywhere, criticised, and often misrepresented, until they were no longer to be recognised.

‘Though all this had no direct influence on the decisions of His Majesty and the superior commanders, the indirect effect of the views and moods thus created must not be under-estimated. Various newspaper reports and private letters added fuel to the fire, which often became a very real influence. The Crown Prince not infrequently heard of these reports, and

discussed them with the Princes and the superior officers, though he did not allow himself to be actually influenced by others. At times he certainly was vexed by such conversations, and began to see matters in a darker light; but he controlled his feelings and did not betray them to his subordinates. The circumstance that he had always to bear the responsibility, even for such orders as he had to issue against his own convictions, often contributed to render his position unenviable, though it did not make him waver in his duty or weaken his military zeal.

‘The presence of the royal headquarters\* at Versailles had also its good points, since the issue of orders was facilitated and shortened, whilst it secured unanimity in execution though opinions might differ.’

Several reports were received on October 6 about the formation of a new hostile army on the line of the Loire near Orleans, and General von der Tann with the 1st Bavarian Corps, 22nd Infantry and 3rd Cavalry Divisions was despatched to oppose any attempt at the relief of Paris. Even at this date the Crown Prince considered this force too small, and wished to undertake the task with every available man that could be spared from the investing army. The King, however, considered it impossible to detach more troops until after the arrival of large reinforcements.

In the meantime the fortifications of Paris had been exhaustively reconnoitred, and on October 10 the Crown Prince received a Cabinet Order to conduct the siege operations against the south front. A formal

\* The Crown Prince had vacated the Prefecture and moved into comfortable quarters at the Villa les Ombrages, on the outskirts of Versailles.

attack on the forts of Issy and Vanves was to be commenced as soon as the siege train arrived from Berlin. In giving the necessary orders to his Chief of Staff, the Crown Prince observed that 'he did not agree with a formal siege, since if it really ended successfully, contrary to expectation, it would entail heavy losses out of all proportion. According to his thinking, we ought to restrict ourselves to starving out the city and energetically repelling every attempt at relief. . . .

' Since the real causes of the delay in bombarding the forts were not generally known at Versailles, much discussion took place before long, culminating in the erroneous conclusion that the Third Army was at fault. Everyone knew that the Prince was opposed to a formal attack, and from that inferred that his staff dallied with the work as being really superfluous. The Minister of War, Von Roon, in particular urged His Majesty to hasten the bombardment, although sufficient preparation had not yet been made. Two balloons, sent to Versailles by the Ministry of War, were out of order and remained unused ; a similar fate befell two traction engines, one of which came to grief in a ditch on the road from Lagny, whilst the other proved on arrival to be so much out of repair that it could not be used till towards the end of the siege. . . . Not until December, after repeated urgings by the Third Army, did the Ministry of War organize a waggon park in Berlin, and send it to Nanteuil, so that it was really only from that time onwards that the ammunition could be brought up with the aid of many transport horses. . . .

' The Crown Prince adhered to his opinions, and had



the satisfaction of knowing that they coincided with those of the King and General von Moltke, who also held it to be the correct course to starve out Paris. Though later on the besieging army deviated from this course, the chief reason is to be found in the fact that the politicians believed it necessary for them to assume the direction of the war, since the operations had apparently come to a standstill. Count Bismarck . . . said to me, amongst others, that he considered a bombardment of Paris absolutely essential for political reasons. He was evidently in league with the Minister of War against the staff of the army; and when the newspapers, besides many private letters and other voices in the Fatherland, began to clamour for a bombardment, a scapegoat had to be found, and naturally was found in the staff of the Third Army.'

In announcing the fall of Metz in the following letter to the Prince, the King raised the Commander of the Third Army to the highest rank of the Prussian army.

'VERSAILLES,

'October 28, 1870.

'With the capitulation of Marshal Bazaine's army and the fortress of Metz, whereby the two hostile armies, which took the field in July this year in the present bloody campaign—certainly not provoked by us—against the united forces of Prussia and Germany, have fallen into our hands as prisoners, so important a period has been reached that I feel impelled to mark the gravity of this event by a special act. You have taken a most important share in encompassing the

successful issue of our weighty task by opening the campaign with two victories in rapid succession ; by covering the left flank of the main army by your strategic advance, enabling it to conquer Bazaine's army in security ; then you joined the main army with your troops, in order to share in the operations against Sedan, and assist in achieving great results there ; and lastly, you have now completed the investment of Paris after some fighting. All this is characteristic of a great and fortunate commander. The highest place in military rank is yours by right, and I hereby promote you General-Field-Marshal. This is the first occasion on which this distinction, which I have also conferred on Prince Frederick Charles, has fallen to Princes of our House. But the successes hitherto achieved in this campaign attain a height and a fulness of important consequences never before equalled, and I am therefore justified in departing from the custom of our House. No words are necessary to tell you what my fatherly heart feels at being able and compelled to express to you my gratitude and that of the Fatherland.

‘ Your loving and grateful father,

‘ WILLIAM.’

The divergence of opinion which existed between the political and military members of the royal headquarters regarding the vexed question of a bombardment culminated in a letter addressed to the King by Count Bismarck and communicated to the Crown Prince on November 30. The Federal Chancellor plainly stated the danger of further delay, which might lead the neutral Powers to under-estimate the strength

and endurance of Germany and cause unwelcome intervention.

A few days later, December 10, the solidarity of the now practically united German nation was demonstrated by the ratification of the treaties concluded with the South German States, after Louis II. of Bavaria, in the name of the German Sovereigns, had asked the King of Prussia to assume the dignity of German Emperor. The North German Reichstag at once despatched a deputation to Versailles, headed by their President, Dr. Simson, to present an address to the King, praying him to accede to the heartfelt wishes of the German nation.

Yet even this momentous undertaking did not prevent the public demands for a so-called bombardment from increasing day by day. 'Not only,' writes Field-Marshal von Blumenthal, 'did the press lay hold of the affair, spreading bloodthirsty articles broadcast, but interpellations were prepared in the Reichstag, which aimed at influencing the King's decision. Many private letters were addressed to me anonymously, invoking me to abandon my resistance, since otherwise people might think that my obstinacy was strengthened by "high-placed English ladies." The Crown Prince received similar letters, but did not allow himself to be affected by them. However, in order to give way in some respect, His Majesty the King ordered a conference of the superior officers concerned on December 17 to decide the bombardment question. This conference, or, rather, council of war, took place in His Majesty's study at the Prefecture. Every officer was more or less against a bombardment, which was championed only by the Minister of War. . . . I

added that even the most necessary ammunition could not be brought up before a fortnight. When General von Moltke's turn came to express an opinion, he briefly remarked: "I agree entirely with what General von Blumenthal has just said." This ended the conference, and, after a thrilling pause, His Majesty said calmly: "Well, there is no necessity for us to decide to-day; we can only do so when the ammunition is actually here."

At last, on January 5, the bombardment commenced against the forts on the south front, and a few days later the first shells were thrown into the city itself. The forts were silenced for the time being, but the heavy guns of the enceinte inflicted considerable losses on the German batteries. On January 19 the long-expected sortie took place from Mont Valerien against the positions held by the 5th Corps. Taking up his position on a height near the Hospice Brezin, the Crown Prince came under the fire of several French batteries at the Montretout entrenchment. As the French infantry fell back a heavy musketry fire was opened on a battery close to the Prince, who reluctantly retired from his dangerous position. It seemed as if he was aware that he was witnessing the last battle of his brilliant military career.

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On December 24 the Christmas festivities began at seven o'clock at the Crown Prince's quarters in the Villa les Ombrages. A band of singers from the 2nd Landwehr Regiment of the Guards, chiefly Berliners, greeted the Commander of the Third Army with Mendelssohn's *Stille Nacht*. But the performance of one of Taubert's gay and spirited *Jugendlieder* was more

in accordance with the occasion. The Crown Prince had invited all the officers of his headquarters, about fifty in number, as well as a few other guests. On a little table near a large Christmas-tree lay the Crown Princess's gifts, which were simple, as became the gravity of the time, consisting of a small pocket pistol and a housewife, while the Berlin Relief Society had sent a carved wooden pipe, bearing the portrait of the King in ivory. The Crown Prince's children sent their good wishes, and wrote to say how they longed for their beloved father's return.

After visiting the German Princes at the Hôtel des Reservoirs, the Crown Prince went to see the King at the Prefecture, where several Princes, officers of high rank, officials of the headquarters, and the royal servants, were assembled for the Christmas festivities.

The Crown Prince presented his august father with a large water-colour drawing, representing the standard-bearer of the King's Grenadiers, who advanced alone with the colours at the storming of Weissenburg, after three of his comrades had fallen one after the other by the enemy's bullets.

Not only did the Prince interest himself in the material welfare of the sick and wounded in the military hospitals, but also in supplying them with amusing and interesting reading. At his request, Franz Duncker, the editor of the *Volks-Zeitung*, sent a thousand copies of his paper daily to the field-hospitals, for distribution among the patients. However, the *Volks-Zeitung* was not regarded with favour at the royal headquarters, and Von Roon, the War Minister, issued an order on December 27, 1870, prohibiting the further distribution of the paper.

New Year's Day, 1871, began with a military ceremony at the Crown Prince's headquarters, where a number of Iron Crosses of the First Class were bestowed on various officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Third Army. After the Church service a levee took place in the *Galérie des Glaces* of the palace, to which all the officers and civil authorities then resident at Versailles were invited.

In the afternoon the King gave a state dinner, at which he expressed his thanks to his princely allies. In replying, the Grand-Duke of Baden hailed King William as the head of the newly-restored German Empire.

In reference to this speech, the Crown Prince remarked to Herr Abeken after dinner :

‘We ought to have advanced farther than that.’ ‘Which means,’ adds Abeken, ‘we ought to have proclaimed the Emperor to-day, or, if possible, crowned him. He was annoyed that his father would not hear of it. I replied that I thought we might be thankful to have got so far. . . .’

‘The Crown Prince thinks a great deal of these outward matters, such as titles, escutcheons and colours, and he is anxious to have the Empire proclaimed with everything appertaining to it; he has the feeling that no one has given or could give it to us, but that we have won it by our own efforts, and that we can therefore now declare the fact before all the world without delay. The King, however, shrinks from all display with a certain repugnance, and Bismarck looks upon it all as either trivial or premature. However, such arrangements must be made some time or other, and as they will have a certain

outward influence, Bismarck really treats them somewhat too cavalierly.'

The Chambers of Baden, Hesse and Württemberg had in the meantime accepted the union with North Germany by large majorities, and on December 31 the treaties with these States were published. The vote of Bavaria still remained to be taken, for though the Bavarian Upper House had accepted the Constitution by thirty-seven to three votes, the Chambers had not yet commenced the final discussion. As, however, the acceptance of the treaties by Bavaria was regarded as a certainty, the ceremony of the proclamation of the Empire was fixed for January 18, the one hundred and seventieth anniversary of the foundation of the Prussian monarchy.

Immediately after the first victories of 1870 the Crown Prince began to reconsider the imperial idea. The narrower Prussian tendency of the Crown Prince's former views had developed into a German nationalist leaning under the influence of the great political changes of 1866 and the victories of the present war. The imperial dignity now appeared to him the incorporation of the national idea, and he yearned for its realization with all the idealistic enthusiasm so characteristic of his nature. In contrast with Count Bismarck, the great desire of the Crown Prince was for an energetic embodiment of the imperial idea, while the chief anxiety of the Chancellor was for the South German allies to feel at home in the new political combination. Bismarck's opinions thus agreed more closely with those of King William, who simply wished to be and to remain the first among his peers, while at this time the Crown Prince was inclined to



regard the Emperor more in the light of the virtual ruler over all Germany.

The Crown Prince had been entrusted with superintending the arrangements for the ceremony of proclaiming the Empire. By his orders each regiment of infantry or cavalry in the selected corps or divisions had to send a banner or standard to Versailles, escorted by one officer, one ensign-bearer and two non-commissioned officers. The colours were brought to Versailles on the evening of January 17, and kept during the night at the headquarters of the Crown Prince.

At noon on January 18 King William drove to the Palace of Versailles, and entered the *Galérie des Glaces* to the strains of 'Praise the Lord of all the World.' The Princes and nobles formed a semicircle, while the Crown Prince placed himself on his father's right hand. To the left, at the furthest point of the semicircle surrounding the King, stood Count Bismarck. Pale and with one hand on his sword, he fixed his gaze on the Crown Prince, who stood resting both hands in front of him on the hilt of his sword. He scarcely once met the look of the Chancellor, but appeared to be lost in a reverie.

The large hall was thronged by a crowd of many hundreds of officers and deputations from the various regiments of the army.

The assembly then sang a verse of the chorale *Sei Lob und Ehr* followed by the usual military service, and a sermon on the text of Psalm xxi. After the hymn *Nun danket Alle Gott* and the benediction had concluded the service, King William walked through the ranks of the assembly to the daïs

and read the following address standing before the colours :

‘ Illustrious Princes and Allies !—In company with all the German Princes and the Free Cities, you have joined in the request of His Majesty the King of Bavaria that I should restore the German Empire, and assume the German imperial dignity for myself and my successors to the Crown of Prussia. I have already expressed my thanks to you in writing for this mark of confidence, and declared my resolve to accede to your request. I have made this resolve in the hope that, with God’s help, I shall succeed in fulfilling the duties connected with the imperial dignity to the blessing of Germany. I announce my resolve to the German nation by a proclamation issued by me to-day, and which I now call upon my Chancellor to read.’

The Chancellor, Count Bismarck, then read the proclamation of January 17. Thereupon the Grand-Duke of Baden cried with a loud voice : ‘ Long live His Majesty Emperor William !’ He was answered by an outburst of cheering, which echoed through the halls of the palace. The Emperor warmly embraced his illustrious son-in-law, and all the Princes crowded round him. The Crown Prince, profoundly moved, first took the right hand of his august father, sank upon one knee and kissed it reverently. The Emperor, however, quickly raised him and clasped him in his arms.

The deputations of officers marched past the King, who then passed along the lines of troops drawn up in the hall. The bands had meanwhile assembled in the Salle de la Paix, opening out of the Galérie des

Glaces, and greeted the Emperor with the Hohenfriedberg March as he left the hall.

On the same day the Emperor addressed the following Order to his son :

‘ After having announced my resolution to accept the German imperial dignity for myself and my successors to the Crown of Prussia by my proclamation of to-day to the German nation, I feel moved to confer upon your Royal Highness a dignity in consonance with the new condition of affairs, namely, the title of Crown Prince of the German Empire, with the appellation of Imperial Highness. These designations are to be followed by the titles of Crown Prince of Prussia and Royal Highness, which are still to be retained. At the same time, I decree that this dignity and the title connected with it shall be borne by every future Heir-Apparent to the Prussian Crown.

‘ The announcement of the above dignity will be made in due course.

‘ WILLIAM.

‘ VERSAILLES,

‘ *January 18, 1871.*’

The next day the last sortie from Paris took place. In the Saxon field-hospital at Versailles the wounded spent many anxious hours during the fighting. They could distinctly hear the enemy's firing coming nearer and nearer, and could see the people of Versailles running through the streets in triumph. Great, therefore was their joy when the Crown Prince himself, riding past the hospital after the victory, sent in word to the patients that all danger was over.

In this battle St. Cloud was entirely burned down by the Germans, after having been set on fire by the French. One house, the large villa of the composer Gounod, had been spared by order of the Crown Prince.

A few days after the sortie of January 19 Jules Favre arrived at the royal headquarters from Paris, to negotiate an armistice, and left Versailles in the afternoon of the 24th. The actual negotiations began upon the 26th. Anticipating that the commanders of Paris would readily consent to the cessation of hostilities as soon as M. Favre had made his report to them, the batteries were ordered to discontinue the bombardment at midnight.

On January 27 and 28 the discussion of the terms continued between Count Moltke and Count Bismarck on the one part, and Jules Favre and General Beaufort on the other part. The Convention of Versailles was signed on the evening of the 28th, in virtue of which an armistice of twenty-one days (until February 19) was agreed upon, and the forts of Paris, with their munitions of war, were surrendered to the German Army.

During this armistice a National Assembly, elected by universal suffrage, was to be convened, for the purpose of deciding the question of peace or war.

On January 27 the Crown Prince received Herr von Forckenbeck, the President of the Prussian Lower Chamber, and Herr von Koeller, the first Vice-President, who presented an address from the Chamber. In the evening both Presidents were invited to dine with the Crown Prince on the occasion of his eldest son's birthday. The Emperor and all the German Princes were present.

Forckenbeck again met the Crown Prince the following evening. The conversation turned upon the imperial dignity, the title of German Emperor or Emperor of Germany, the proclamation of the Empire, the House of Princes,\* the Imperial Cabinet, and the composition and work of the next Reichstag.

As the representatives of the French nation were not all assembled at the opening of the new Parliament at Bordeaux (February 12), and business could only begin on the 13th, a prolongation of the armistice until February 24 became necessary. This interval was employed by the Crown Prince in a journey to Orleans, Blois and Tours, which was prompted by the wish to return Prince Frederick Charles's visit to Versailles, and to become acquainted with the region of the Loire, especially Touraine, celebrated both for its natural beauties and its historic memories.

The negotiations for peace began on February 21, after the Commission appointed by the Assembly at Bordeaux had repaired to Paris. Before the deliberations commenced, Thiers had a long private audience of the Emperor William on February 21. Immediately afterwards Thiers called at the Villa les Ombrages to pay a visit to the Crown Prince.

The term of the armistice was twice extended, while Thiers wrestled alternately with his countrymen and with Bismarck, in order to come to an agreement

\* The Crown Prince wished the Constitution of the newly restored Empire to be so arranged that there should be an Upper House (*Staatenhaus*) and a Reichstag as Lower House. In the Upper House the separate *States* were to be represented by their rulers (Kings, Dukes, etc.), hence the name *Staatenhaus*. Bismarck rejected this scheme, and created the Bundesrath in addition to the Reichstag.

respecting the terms of peace ; and for six long days the French statesman endeavoured to reduce the demands of the inexorable Chancellor point by point. He appealed from Bismarck to the Emperor that Metz at least should be spared to France. The Emperor received him, and the Crown Prince condoled with him, but they dismissed him with empty words, and referred him to Bismarck's decision. It was not until six o'clock on the evening of February 26 that the Preliminaries of Peace were signed at Versailles. On receiving this news, the Emperor sent for the Crown Prince, and greeted him with deep emotion.

On February 28 Abeken writes :

'The Crown Prince was delighted on Sunday evening, which I spent with him ; youth and the future are naturally more manifest in him than in the King. He said that he was perfectly well aware of the immense responsibility that lay upon him worthily to carry on the great work, so auspiciously inaugurated ; it was three times as great as what he had borne as Crown Prince of Prussia, but he did not shrink from this responsibility. God would give him the men he needed, and had already given him a support and help—which was a real blessing—in his wife, and so he hoped to be able to accomplish the great task.'

March 1 was fixed for the entry of the German troops into Paris. In the morning the Emperor William held a review of the troops of the Third Army, detailed to occupy Longchamps in the Bois de Boulogne. After the march past the troops made their way to the gates of Paris, while the Emperor and his son drove back to Versailles without any display. The following day the Crown Prince rode

through the Bois de Boulogne and the Arc de Triomphe, accompanied by the Grand-Duke of Baden and his personal aides-de-camp. Afterwards he proceeded through the Champs Élysées to the Place de la Concorde as far as the gardens of the Tuileries, then along the Seine past the Trocadéro and Passy to the Point du Jour.

After the ratification of the peace treaty, it only remained for the German troops to see that its stipulations were carried out. The task of the Commander of the Third Army was completed, and preparations for the journey home began. On the Sunday before he left, the Crown Prince once more visited the little church which he was in the habit of attending while at Versailles. The text of the sermon was Isa. lii. 7 : 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace . . . that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth !'



## CHAPTER XV

### AFTER THE GREAT WAR

1871—1874

THE Emperor and the Crown Prince left Versailles on March 7. The headquarters were transferred to Nancy on the 13th, and whilst there the Crown Prince took leave of his army in the following Order :

#### ‘SOLDIERS OF THE THIRD ARMY !

‘When I assumed command last July, I expressed the hope that the bravery and devotion of the united German races would succeed in overcoming the common enemy, who had challenged us so wantonly to battle. You have splendidly justified this confidence ; for the Third Army can boast of as many victories as it has seen engagements in this hard-fought campaign.

‘After you had entered the enemy’s territory at Weissenburg, and so paved the way to a series of victories, a powerful antagonist was defeated two days afterwards at the sanguinary battle of Wörth ; swiftly pursuing the retreating foe, you played a glorious and important part on the memorable day of Sedan. You pushed forward untiringly into the heart of the country, forced the flying enemy behind the walls of

his capital, and held him there closely surrounded for nearly five months, while you braved all dangers and the rigours of a severe winter with incomparable endurance.

‘While a part of you repulsed the enemy advancing on all sides to relieve Paris, in a series of unequal and bloody engagements, all sorties were energetically and successfully driven back by the beleaguering troops, so that at length our antagonists had no choice but to lay down their arms and open the gates of their proud capital, so often declared to be impregnable and inviolable.

‘Such deeds belong to history, and our country looks upon her sons with pride. These great successes could not be gained without great sacrifices, and we are filled with sorrow by the thought of our many fallen comrades, whose memory will be honoured for all time.

‘By command of His Majesty the Emperor, I now leave you on the conclusion of a glorious and hard-won peace, assuring you of my deepest gratitude and thanks. I take leave of the Prussian and Bavarian Corps, the soldiers of Württemberg and Baden, with the confident hope that the brotherhood of arms and the spirit of union cemented on the bloody field of battle may never disappear, but increase in vitality and strength to the honour, glory and blessing of our common Fatherland.

‘FREDERICK WILLIAM,

‘Commander-in-Chief of the Third Army,  
Crown Prince of the German Empire  
and of Prussia.

‘NANCY, *March 14, 1871.*’

A distinguished French journalist thus describes the impression created by the Crown Prince in the enemy's country :

‘The Crown Prince has left the memory of countless traits of kindness and humanity in the land that he fought against, and among the inhabitants to whom he brought war with all its misery and horror. When he was present, no excess remained unpunished, and no disorder was suffered. No human life was uselessly or lightly sacrificed, and no oppression was permitted. He and his subordinates showed esteem for the unfortunate defeated enemy, and paid a tribute of respect to their bravery. Versailles owes to him in great measure the order observed during the period of occupation, and particularly the preservation of its public monuments.’

On March 15 the Emperor and the Crown Prince started together from Nancy on their return journey, which was indeed a triumphal progress. At Saarbrücken, Mayence, Frankfort-on-the-Main, Weimar and Magdeburg, a splendid reception was prepared for them. At the Wildpark station at Potsdam the Empress, the Crown Princess, and the Grand-Duchess Louise of Baden awaited their arrival.

The Crown Prince arrived in Berlin in the afternoon of March 17, and drove to his palace in an open carriage, with his royal consort and his eldest son, amidst the enthusiastic cheers of the populace. At the threshold of his home their other children were assembled to welcome their father.

The Crown Prince was present at the opening of the first German Reichstag in the White Drawing-room of the Royal Castle on March 21. On this

occasion Count Bismarck was elevated by the Emperor to the dignity of Prince.

The troops made their triumphal entry into the capital on June 16. Everywhere they were met by waving flags, fluttering handkerchiefs, ringing cheers, and showers of wreaths and flowers. Shortly after noon the imposing procession passed the Brandenburg Gate; the Emperor William was followed by the Crown Prince and Prince Frederick Charles, both bearing a Field-Marshal's *baton*, the symbol of their newly-won dignity. At the Pariser Platz the Emperor was received by the maidens of the city, one of whom recited a poem in his honour. The procession then continued its progress, amid the indescribable rejoicings of the population.

In response to an invitation from Queen Victoria, the Crown Prince and his family paid a visit to London at the beginning of July, and took up their abode at the German Embassy. The population and press of the British capital gave an enthusiastic welcome to the royal guests. The *Times* referred to the Crown Prince in the following very remarkable article:

‘The presence of the Prince would be the chief social event of the London season, even if he had no special claims on our respect in his personal character. But there are few personages of the day even among Royal Families who hold so high a position and have played so great a part. He is the heir to a Crown which is at once the most ancient, the most modern, and the most powerful on the Continent . . . Germany, moreover, promises to be still greater in her future than in her past. She offers the only solid hope for

Continental order and progressive civilization amid surging nationalities and restless dreams. The power for good and evil which may some day rest in the hands of the present Prince is immeasurable, and the heir to the headship of the Germanic race enjoys a combined honour and responsibility rarely equalled. . . . Such a position, especially in these days, makes a great demand on its possessor, and a man's qualities must be high indeed to increase its lustre. Yet, in the welcome accorded to the Prince, an appreciation of his personal merits will have greater influence than the claims of his position. He comes among us, the hero of military exploits unsurpassed, if equalled, in the world's history. . . . The Prince, moreover, has won as much honour for his gentleness as for his prowess in war. . . . His soldiers knew that his heart was with each of them in their perils, and his opponents have done frank homage to his generous and gentle behaviour. If the Prussians have been occasionally harsh, no one has ever charged the Prince with this fault, and he has done all that was possible to deprive war of its worst motives and characteristics.

‘The Prince is known to have been the consistent friend in Prussia of all mild and liberal administration, so far as was consistent with the paramount objects which his father had in view. He has gathered around him by this tendency the general confidence of his future subjects, and the fact that he is the heir to the resuscitated throne is one of the most reassuring circumstances in the prospects of the Empire. His influence in any position has been exerted, and will, we believe, be exerted, in behalf of a peaceful and un-aggressive policy.’

The London visit was brought to an end, on July 13, by the Crown Prince's journey to Munich, to attend the triumphal return of the Bavarian troops. The greatest enthusiasm was roused in Bavaria by the simplicity of the Crown Prince's manners, the kindness with which he met women and children, and the genuine sympathy with which he greeted his brothers-in-arms, especially the wounded, at all the stations. The marks of honour bestowed by King Louis, as well as the homage offered to the Crown Prince by the inhabitants of the Bavarian capital, were called forth as much by sincere esteem for the person of the Prince as by enthusiasm for the newly restored national union. On his part the Crown Prince displayed full sympathy with the feelings of the Bavarian people. He referred with gratitude to the German spirit of King Louis and Bavaria's loyal brotherhood in arms, and laid stress upon the mutual confidence of North and South Germany as one of the conditions of the new Empire's existence.

On the morning after his arrival in Munich, King Louis reviewed the Bavarian troops at the Oberwiesenfeld, where the Crown Prince invested Captain von der Tann and five non-commissioned officers with the Iron Cross in the name of the Emperor.

An eye-witness thus describes the appearance of the Crown Prince on this occasion :

‘A sudden silence fell upon the multitude, and all eyes were turned towards a solitary cavalier advancing with simple dignity, the *baton* of a Field-Marshal in his hand, and upon his countenance that expression of earnest sincerity which ranks higher than any beauty ; it is the Crown Prince of the German Empire. Like

the roar of a tempest burst forth the universal acclamation, a storm of joy that made the welkin ring. Frederick William bowed low on every side, but it seemed as though he were more deeply impressed by the solemnity of the moment than by the cheering. There was not a trace of consciousness in his manner; he had undergone no change since Germany placed the General's sword in his hands. The chiefest characteristics of the German nature, which are the stamp of our worth, seemed embodied in his person; he is not only a Prince, but the paragon of the German nation.'

After the entry of the troops a military banquet took place at the palace in the Hall of Victory. The Crown Prince returned thanks for the King's toast to the victorious army and their leader, and concluded with proposing the health of the King of Bavaria. At a State performance of Paul Heyse's festival play *Der Friede* the King and the Crown Prince received a perfect ovation. At an allusion in the prologue to the hopes which the new German Empire placed in King Louis and the Crown Prince Frederick William, the King rose, and in sight of the public clasped the hand of the Crown Prince amid the ringing cheers of the audience.

Not a house remained unilluminated that night in the Bavarian capital. At half-past ten the King drove through the streets of the town accompanied by his illustrious guest, and was greeted with loud cheers by the inhabitants.

In spite of the numerous festivities which claimed his attention, the Crown Prince found time to visit Gustav von Liebig among others. On entering the



celebrated chemist's cool laboratory, the Crown Prince jestingly remarked: 'Here one sees the wonders of chemistry! I believe you must prepare your own atmosphere. How do you manage it in this heat?'

From Munich the Crown Prince travelled by way of Ems and Coblenz back to his family at Osborne in the Isle of Wight.

A year had now passed since the glorious war had commenced and the Third Army had fought its first battles under the leadership of the Crown Prince. Those days of victory were gratefully remembered in the Fatherland, and many were the congratulations which the Crown Prince received on this occasion.

In the enjoyment of the blessings of a hard-won peace the Crown Prince celebrated his fortieth birthday, on October 18, 1871, at Wilhelmshöhe, near Cassel. None of the great Sovereigns of Prussia had gained such fame and laboured so successfully for their country before their accession to the throne. By his prowess in war and the power of his never-failing kindness he had become the hero of the now united German nation. All hearts were his in North and South alike; for everybody felt that the work of unification owed a debt of deep gratitude to him. He stood at the prime of life, and at the height of fame and transcendent popularity.

The long period of peace which now ensued afforded the Crown Prince a special field for the exercise of his energies in furthering the public welfare. Prevented by circumstances from taking any active part in political affairs, he devoted his time and influence to social problems. In accordance with his idealistic tendencies, he regarded the modification of class

distinctions, recognition of intellectual claims, personal *rapprochement* of employers and employed, and kindly intercourse between man and man, as the chief means of compensation for the inevitable hardships of industrial life. Freedom from economical distress would, he hoped, result from the spiritual liberty and elevation of the nation.

It was not sufficient for the Crown Prince merely to cherish benevolent feelings towards his fellow-men, but he regarded it as a duty to make such benevolence manifest by acts of charity. Owing to his successful prosecution of schemes of this nature, he became in course of time the centre and the initiator of all charitable efforts in the country.\*

The energy with which the Crown Prince entered upon the duties of protector of the Royal Museum, recently conferred on him, and the devotion of all his influence to important matters of art and science outside this narrower sphere, were not the result of mere royal dilettantism. All that he accomplished in this direction was prompted by the wish to encourage and instruct the masses of the people by means of these institutions. He was not only a lover of art, but an earnest student, and thus a new period began for the art collections of Prussia. Owing to his zeal and energy, new funds were raised for the purpose of encouraging Prussian art, which had hitherto been somewhat ungenerously treated. He ordered that every report to the Minister of Education regarding the Museum should first pass through his

\* A connected account of the Crown Prince's labours in this direction will be found in the work *Kaiser Friedrich als Freund des Volkes*, by Dr. Victor Böhmert. Leipsic, 1888.

hands, and that a copy of every order from the Ministry of Education to the directors of the Museum should be transmitted through him. Thanks to his initiative, scientists of the first rank were now placed at the head of the various departments of the Museum.

It happened in the autumn of 1871 that the post of an art arbiter fell vacant, and the Crown Prince expressed his personal wish to Herr von Mühler, the Minister, that this post should be offered either to Professor Hettner, of Dresden, or Professor Springer, of Bonn, whereupon the Minister promised that this should be done. Scarcely had the Crown Prince left Berlin, however, than Herr von Mühler proposed to the Emperor William the appointment of a certain Herr Wussoff, and the Emperor accordingly issued the necessary Cabinet Order. The Crown Prince only learned what had happened on his return home, and at once communicated the facts of the case to the Emperor, who wrote to the Minister of Education: 'Your conduct towards my house is wanting in loyalty.' Herr von Mühler thereupon sent in his resignation, which was accepted on January 21, 1872.

Still more fervently did the Crown Prince, aided by his royal consort, labour for the improvement of applied art (*Kunstgewerbe*) in Prussia, by giving it every possible encouragement and assistance. Prussia was almost the last of the German countries to come under the influence of the universal artistic movement in industry. The first impulse to this was given by the Crown Princess, who had attentively followed the exertions and progress of her native country in the improvement of its industry. In the spring of 1865 she commissioned Dr. H. Schwabe to

draw up a memorandum setting forth the necessity of founding a School of Applied Art, with a reference to similar institutions in England. Independently of this, efforts had been made by the Berlin Mechanical Institute at the beginning of 1866, with the same end in view. The movement thus inaugurated led eventually to the foundation of the Museum of Industrial Art at Berlin, which is connected with a School of Applied Art. It is largely due to the encouragement given by the Crown Prince and Princess to this movement that applied art found a home in Prussia, and in the course of time reached so high a standard of excellence that other countries were fain to learn from Germany.

A great impulse was given to the further development of the Industrial Museum by the exhibition of *objets de vertu* in the Royal Armoury at Berlin, which owed not only its first suggestion, but its entire collection and arrangement, to the direct personal initiative and support of the Crown Prince and Princess.

The anniversary of the storming of the Düppel entrenchments was the occasion of the following letter from the Crown Prince to his former comrade, Prince Charles of Roumania :

‘ POTSDAM,

‘ April 18, 1872.

‘ . . . My best thanks for the photographs ; your child must have charming and interesting features ; she reminds one of both the families to which her parents belong. The surroundings amused us, and we greatly admired Elisabeth in the national costume. In spite of photographs, however, I can hardly imagine

my old friend Charles as a married man and father, with a child on his arm ! It is an indescribable happiness to be a father, and I can only too readily imagine how you spend every free hour in the society of your child, and that you found the little mite the only consolation for her mother's absence during your first separation. . . .

‘When I reflect upon the course of events in Germany, since the Düppel assault first attracted the attention of the world to us Prussians, it always seems to me as though I had listened with rapt attention to a long history lesson ; that I was called to witness the reality appears a marvel. May our people in future preserve the same becoming earnestness and humility which up to now they have not laid aside, in spite of all their successes ! So long as that feeling is not abandoned, we show ourselves worthy of the deeds we have witnessed.

‘You will remember that the thought of a reconstitution of the Empire as the finishing touch to the work of German unity has always occupied me, and been among my sincerest wishes. I longed for the peaceable and bloodless achievement of this object, and perhaps it might have been attained without a war. But these are idle questions, which can no longer be considered ; we have rather to look to a systematic and thorough consolidation of the Empire, the external form of which is perhaps completed, but many a year must pass before its Southern elements have quite found their place in the new structure. The people, especially those who took an active part in the war, are far more favourable to the new situation than the Cabinets ; I shall therefore not be at all surprised if

the next few years bring us some most disagreeable differences of opinion. The peculiarities of each separate country forming the Empire will always be respected, and interference with their internal affairs must be avoided; I therefore do not at all like the expression "a uniform State." But it is for that very reason that earnest pains must be taken that perfect unity may be displayed in military, legal, and foreign political affairs, and that these elements may become more and more firmly welded together.

'To my joy, our neighbour States do not appear to view our union with unfavourable eyes, and that is in itself a great deal; we shall certainly not be loved by any of them. The revengeful feeling in France is only natural and explicable, though much water will flow between the banks of the Rhine before that feeling will take the form of action.'

The month of April, 1872, brought a new happiness to the Crown Prince and Princess, for on the 22nd a daughter, Margaret, was born to them.

Among the military duties of the Crown Prince after the war, none gave him greater pleasure than the annual inspection of the troops of the South German States. Here the former leader of the Third Army met his brave comrades on the manœuvring-grounds of the Rhine and Main, in the plain of the Danube, and in the Alpine regions, and witnessed the progress made in the training of the troops.

Every place which the Crown Prince visited on these journeys of inspection received him with an enthusiastic welcome. Even at Amberg, in the Upper Palatinate, where the Catholic Congress under Wind-

horst had assembled, the Prince's reception was indescribably hearty. The Crown Prince had a remarkably pleasant manner with the people. Seldom has a Prince understood how to gain the hearts of the humbler classes as he did. It frequently happened while returning from the manœuvres that the Crown Prince drove his staff almost to despair by pausing at every fresh group of people that he met and conversing with them.

At his arrival at Kempten, in Bavaria, on one occasion, the local choral society assembled at the entrance to the station and greeted him with a song. This must have given him great pleasure, for he walked up to the singers, borrowed a copy of the music, and sang with them. Such incidents wrought a close bond between Prince and people.

In the first week of September, 1872, the meeting of the three Emperors took place in Berlin. In honour of the Russian and Austrian Sovereigns, the Crown Prince and Princess gave a splendid fête in the park of the New Palace. The park itself was brilliantly illuminated in the evening with many thousands of lights.

In November, 1872, the Crown Prince visited Dresden on the occasion of the golden wedding of the King and Queen of Saxony. From there he intended to join his consort and children in Switzerland, but on the journey he fell seriously ill of an internal inflammation. After a slow convalescence he went, about the middle of December, to stay at Wiesbaden with his family.

At the time of the Crown Prince's illness, the *Rheinische Kurier* reported a significant remark of



the Crown Prince concerning Prince Bismarck : 'The physicians say that my illness is dangerous,' said the Crown Prince to his consort. 'My father is old, and Prince William is still a minor; it is therefore not unlikely that you may be called upon to act as Regent for a time. You must promise me to do nothing without Prince Bismarck, whose counsels have raised our House to undreamed-of power and greatness.'

The Crown Prince returned from Wiesbaden to Berlin in the month of March, 1873. By his express desire, no official reception took place; but the people would not be denied giving him a hearty welcome at the station and on the way to his palace, in spite of the pouring rain.

About the end of April, the Crown Prince paid a visit to Vienna, accompanied by the Princess, for the purpose of attending the opening of the International Exhibition on May 1. The royal guests met with a splendid reception at the Austrian Imperial Court, and during their stay in Vienna received many marks of attention and regard. Here the Crown Prince made the acquaintance of the painter Heinrich von Angeli, who gives the following account of his royal visitors :

'I was standing one day before the easel in my studio, which was then in the Heugasse. There was a knock at the door, and the Crown Prince Frederick William and his consort entered the room. The Crown Princess was wearing a simple costume of a light colour. I remember the circumstance in every detail. The Prince praised my pictures in the Exhibition, and the Crown Princess invited me to come to Potsdam. I accepted this proposal, and received a

commission to paint the portrait of the Crown Prince. Since then I have been to Potsdam nearly every year for the Crown Prince's birthday and upon other occasions. His manner to me was that of an ordinary private gentleman, full of delightful simplicity and charming affability. When one saw him at the side of his consort, surrounded by his children, one was filled with pleasure at the sight of this simple and charming family picture. One might imagine one's self in the house of a private citizen. The conversation always used to turn upon artistic and scientific subjects; the German and English classics were diligently studied, and there was a great deal of music. But political and military topics were never touched upon. The Crown Princess, a lady endowed with every adornment of heart and mind, formerly worked at sculpture. Later on she devoted herself to painting, and I am proud to be able to call myself her teacher. The Crown Prince took a lively interest in his consort's artistic progress, and used to express the greatest delight at every successful sketch. Finally, he himself began working in charcoal and colour. The hand that wielded the sword so powerfully learned to use the brush with surprising dexterity.

‘During the sittings for his portrait, the Crown Prince was always quiet and attentive. He is in every respect a remarkably quiet character, never speaking a word more than is absolutely necessary in ordinary conversation. During my residence in the Crown Prince's family, the conversation often turned upon Vienna and the Viennese. “Vienna is a splendid city, and the Viennese are charming people.” So the Crown Prince and Princess always

expressed themselves. The Prince visited almost all the art collections and institutions in Vienna, and gave especial praise to the Austrian Museum, and the endeavours of the Viennese industrial classes to accomplish great things in the field of applied art. He often said to me that there ought to be an institution in Berlin similar to the Austrian Museum. I was interested to learn that the Crown Prince was in the habit of drawing a parallel between Berlin and any large town that he visited, and anything that he admired or approved of in foreign countries he sought to introduce into his native land. The immense impetus that Berlin had received during the last few years was a source of great pride to him, and at the word "Germany" his eyes would begin to sparkle, and a flash of joy would pass over his fine, manly features.'

The Crown Prince and Princess left Vienna on May 19 in order to travel by way of Venice and Milan to the Italian lakes, and thence to return to Potsdam to receive the Shah of Persia.

At the end of July the Crown Prince and his family went to the watering-place of Wyk, on the island of Föhr. On August 3 the Crown Prince laid the foundation-stone of the new University buildings at Kiel.

The same evening the Crown Prince went on board the yacht *Grille*, and sailed for Christiania for the purpose of being present at the coronation of the King and Queen of Sweden at Drontheim. The Crown Prince undertook an excursion of several days' duration to Telemarken, and after the return of their Majesties of Norway and Sweden paid a visit to

Stockholm. King Oscar invested the Crown Prince with the Grand Cross of the Order of St. Olaf, and on his departure presented him with a life-size portrait of Gustavus Adolphus II., a gift which was valued by the recipient all the more as he had always been an admirer of that kingly hero.

On the arrival of the Crown Prince at Malmoë on August 17, whence he was to start upon his journey home, he received an unexpected visit from the Crown Prince of Denmark, who had arrived shortly before from Copenhagen on the frigate *Sjælland*, bringing an invitation to visit the Royal Family of Denmark at Fredensborg, before returning to the island of Föhr. The journey had gratifying political results, as henceforth a friendly intercourse began between the two kingdoms, which in course of time led to an alliance between the Royal Houses of Sweden and Prussia.

On the conclusion of his stay at Wyk, the Crown Prince sent word to the poet Klaus Groth, whose poem of *Quickborn*, by his own confession, had moved him to tears, to come, if his health permitted, to Neumünster on the day of the Crown Prince's departure. Groth appeared at the appointed day at the Neumünster station to await the arrival of the Crown Prince. When the train arrived, Groth walked towards the royal carriage. 'I had not yet got to it,' he relates, 'when a glass door opened, a small iron staircase fell down, and the Crown Prince came out of the door on to the steps, held out both hands to me, and drew me into the carriage. I am not easily impressed by external signs of friendliness, but, on the contrary, rather distrust them. But the manner of

my reception was so hearty, kind, and friendly that I willingly gave myself up to its influence. I shall never forget a single detail of that moment. I have never in my life been so enchanted with the appearance of any man as I was with that of the Crown Prince. His splendid figure is remarkable for both strength and beauty in an unusual degree, and kindness of heart, stamped upon his manly face, sounded unmistakably in his voice, as he said: "How glad I am at last to see the man who has given us so many pleasant hours! Come in! Here is my wife!" She was standing, leaning against the small stove, and she too, gave me a softly-spoken welcome. Her appearance was nothing less than royal, and she looked graceful, but almost timid, beside her husband's towering form. When she then proceeded to thank me for my ballads, the Crown Prince said to her in an audible tone: "Why, you never told me about them!" "You were not here, you know; you were in Sweden," she replied. "And here are my children." I only had a glance at them, but noticed that they looked very tired. "And how are you feeling now?" etc. After a few minutes' conversation, he dismissed me with the words: "I must now say good-bye to my family; they are going to Hamburg. I will come out again to you in a moment, and shall have plenty of time, for I am going to Panker."

'When the Hamburg train had gone, the Crown Prince came to me on the platform, where we walked up and down together for quite a quarter of an hour. Our conversation was, naturally, upon such an occasion, of a light and cheerful nature. Among other things, the Crown Prince asked: "When are the

University buildings at Kiel likely to be finished?" I said I hoped in about two years. "Are we not colleagues?" he asked me half seriously, as he looked at me. "I was not aware of it," was my answer. "Why, yes!" he said; "surely you are an Honorary Doctor of the Oxford University, as I am!" "No, your Royal Highness; but as you have made use of the expression 'colleague' in reference to me, I may be allowed to boast of being, like you, an Honorary Doctor of the Bonn University." At this we smilingly bowed to each other. During this time we were strolling up and down the long Neumünster platform. In saying good-bye the Prince shook hands, with many kind words, as his train was ready to start. He waved his hand to me out of the window, and that was the last I ever saw of him.'

On January 23, 1874, the marriage of the Grand-Duchess Maria Alexandrovna of Russia with Prince Alfred of England, Duke of Edinburgh, took place at St. Petersburg. The Crown Prince, who, with his consort, was present at the wedding festivities, was referred to by the *Grashdanin* newspaper as the hero of the day, whose chivalry and charming manners were the talk of all.

Many years before William I. had conferred upon his son the office of Patron of the Masonic Lodges of Prussia, as well as the presidency of the Grand Masters' Union in Berlin. The Crown Prince gradually discovered that various reforms were necessary in the sphere of Freemasonry, but here he encountered much opposition, and now resigned his position as Grand Master.

The following letter from the Crown Prince to Prince Charles of Roumania, written in March, 1874, reveals the writer's views upon the Kulturkampf which was just beginning.

‘You will certainly have followed with sympathy the course of the lamentable religio-political struggle between our Government and the Papal Curia. I am sorry that it should have occurred; but I foresaw it, as the custom, established these thirty years, of giving way to the demands of Rome, rather than maintaining a firm position, could not possibly continue. I think, perhaps, a different sequence might have been observed in legislating; but since the struggle has been undertaken, we must carry it through. Austria, very opportunely for us, is beginning to adopt a similar attitude.

‘I am sorry that there should be a report current that the Government wishes to attack the Catholic Church and its dogmas as such. Everyone who is capable of calm deliberation must know that nothing is further from our thoughts.’

A few weeks later the Prince and Princess of Roumania suffered a great loss by the death of their only child Princess Marie, at the age of three and half years. The first letter of sympathy was received from the Crown Prince, who wrote to Prince Charles as follows :

‘We have just received the unexpected and afflict-ing news of the terrible misfortune that has befallen you. May God’s grace be with you and grant you strength to bear the desperate sorrow, the burden of which we know from our own experience ! In thought I put myself in your frame of mind, and realize that



you must both be numbed with grief at seeing your sweet child lifeless before you, and at knowing that you can never again see a light in her dear eyes, never again a smile on her face !

‘ These are hours in which, in spite of all Christian principles, one still asks: Why need it have been? And certainly it is hard to say: “Thy will be done!”

‘ I wrote this text on the tomb of my son Sigismund, your godchild, because I know of no other consolation; and yet I cannot conquer that pain to-day, though many years have already passed, and though God has given me a large family. Time does certainly blunt the keenest edge of a parent’s anguish, but it does not remove the burden, which remains one’s companion through life. . . .

‘ Your grief is also ours, and you are both the object of our anxiety and our prayers; for that my wife is at one with me in these thoughts of sympathy you know as well as that these lines are for poor Elisabeth no less than for you. God be with you, and be merciful to you!’

On June 19 and 20 the Crown Prince visited the International Agricultural Exhibition at Bremen. The agricultural societies of Alsace-Lorraine had sent representatives to this Exhibition, who were presented to the Crown Prince at a soirée given by Consul H. H. Meier, the Chairman of the North German Lloyd. One of these delegates addressed a few words to the Crown Prince in French. He begged His Imperial Highness not to be displeased because his fellow-countrymen mourned over the loss of their former Fatherland and its misfortunes. They hoped for indulgence and justice on his part.

The Crown Prince replied in the French language :

‘I thank you for your loyalty and frankness. I perfectly understand that one cannot part from a great nation without regret ; but you may rest assured that time will bring consolation to you. Later on you will see that you have lost nothing, and that you belong to-day to a very great nation, which is in a position to guarantee peace and quiet to you. Tell your fellow-countrymen that my endeavours for the prosperity of your country will never be wanting.’

At the beginning of June the Crown Prince and Princess with their younger children set out for the Isle of Wight. The royal party embarked at Bremerhaven on the *Hohenzollern* and was escorted by a naval squadron.

About this time the Royal Academy of Arts at Berlin elected the Crown Prince an honorary member, and begged him to accept this office. The Crown Prince accepted the honour in a gracious letter, written from Sandown in the Isle of Wight, in which he declared that his constant and earnest endeavour was to manifest his warm interest in the art of the nation in a practical and successful manner.

Early in September the Crown Prince visited Cassel, where he rejoined his consort and his two eldest sons, who were to attend the Gymnasium (Classical College) in that town. On the day following their arrival, the Crown Prince and Princess paid a visit to the Headmaster, Dr. Häussner, to arrange with him about the entrance of Prince William into the Second Class.\*

\* Corresponding to the Fifth Form in English schools.

At the end of November the Crown Prince repeated his visit to Cassel, to satisfy himself with regard to the health and progress of his sons. On this occasion he was also present at the lessons given in the Gymnasium.

## CHAPTER XVI

### HISTORICAL AND ARTISTIC RESEARCHES

1875—1878

THE Crown Prince and Princess spent April and May in Italy. After a short stay at Florence, the Crown Prince paid a visit to the King of Italy at Naples (April 25). Upon his return the Crown Prince and Princess of Italy came to Florence to meet their German guests. While staying at Genoa the Crown Prince travelled twice to Berlin, on May 13, to welcome the Czar to the capital, and afterwards, on May 28, to receive the King and Queen of Sweden. The Crown Prince and Princess also spent some time at Venice, where they saw much of the artists' colony. Anton von Werner, the historical painter, wrote as follows :

‘In May, 1875, I had the privilege of spending some delightful days in Venice with the Crown Prince and Princess. The Crown Princess enjoyed the artistic treasures of Venice, and studied, drew, and painted indefatigably, either from the works of the time when Venice was glorious, or from Nature in the Square of St. Mark and in the canals, often quite alone and incognito, or else she painted studies of

heads in Passini's studio with the rest of us. . . . At that time I had almost daily opportunity of seeing the Princess's sketch-books, and was surprised at her unerring taste, which always fixed upon what was artistic and worth painting, and the ease and accuracy with which the object was represented, no matter in what medium. And still higher than her technical powers did I value the artistic comprehension and feeling of the Princess as it appeared upon all occasions, both with regard to works of art and impressions of Nature.

'The Crown Princess felt all the delight and poetry of that golden May time in Venice as only an artist can feel it in the joy of artistic creation ; and it was as though Art herself were desirous of giving the artist Princess an ever-memorable picture on the evening of their departure from Venice, when the crowd of torchlit gondolas filled the Grand Canal, and the full splendour of the moon shed her light over the proud illuminated palaces and the Rialto. . . . It was a picture worthy of Oswald Achenbach ! Since that time the Crown Princess, notwithstanding the manifold duties of her exalted position, has persevered in all branches of her artistic studies, with a mind ever open to the revelations of Nature and the creations of ancient and modern art. Without being directly under a master, the Princess has derived profit from studying the work of prominent artists, such as Professor von Angeli for portraits, the late C. Wilberg and Ascan Lutteroth for landscapes, and Professor Albert Hertel for still-life studies. Excellent portrait studies, *e.g.*, the life-size portrait of Prince William and of the Hereditary Princess of Meiningen in Renais-

sance costume, show Angeli's influence ; while the innumerable sketches in pencil or water-colours, astonishingly light and firm in line, show by their technique that it was not in vain that Wilberg and Lutteroth enjoyed the privilege of staying at the New Palace at Potsdam, or in Italy or Switzerland, in company with the artistic Princess.'

On July 5 the Crown Prince visited Vienna to attend the funeral of the Emperor Ferdinand, who in 1848 abdicated in favour of his nephew, Francis Joseph.

Between Linz and Munich, on the return journey, the train in which the Crown Prince was travelling collided with a goods-train ; no one, however, was seriously hurt, and the Crown Prince was uninjured.

At Cologne an International Horticultural Exhibition took place in August, at the suggestion of the Empress Augusta. The Crown Prince, as patron of the Exhibition, performed the opening ceremony upon August 25.

The festivities in honour of the presence of the Crown Prince lasted for two days. On the second day the French Consul at Düsseldorf, Vicomte de Fontenay, proposed the health of the Crown Prince in the German language, having previously received authorization from the French Minister Decazes. On the Crown Prince's departure, he was enabled to carry away the conviction that the Rhine district was devoted heart and soul to the House of Hohenzollern.

The following letter from the Crown Prince to Prince Charles of Roumania, written in October, 1875, gives an interesting sketch of contemporary events :

‘It is not without anxiety that I turn towards you in the South-east of Europe, where Herzegovina is keeping us in suspense; but the circumstance that your country remains quiet and your name is never mentioned assures me of the discretion and composure with which you manage to avoid the rocks. It is greatly in favour of the peace of Europe that nobody seems inclined to quarrel with the Turks, and that everyone appears to have an aversion to the mere possibility of the reopening of the so-called Eastern Question. One reason is that the Great Powers have plenty of occupation at home, which will keep them employed for years to come, and leaves them no time for troubling about more general matters. . . .

‘Matters are progressing slowly but surely in the Empire. The German nation adheres to the Emperor and the Empire, whilst many Cabinets only yield to force of circumstances. In South Germany the Württemberg Army Corps has been able to assimilate our principles so thoroughly that it has almost reached the standard of a Prussian corps. The Bavarians, too, are very industrious, and take great pains to bring their army organization up to our standard, in spite of certain hostile elements whose aim it is to frustrate this object, and who have succeeded in preventing Prussian instructors from being sent there, or Bavarian soldiers from coming to us to learn their work, which Württemberg has done for the last eight years. . . .

‘I am enjoying these warm autumn days in peace and quiet, after having drained the cup of inspections to the dregs. I am always willing to fulfil my duties, but there are limits, especially when one is no longer



as young as one was. I had to attend manœuvres in Württemberg, Bavaria, Silesia and Mecklenburg, and, as these countries do not exactly lie close together, I dashed from one to the other by rail, like a State messenger. Victoria and I spent six enjoyable weeks in the spring in gorgeous Italy, just in time to reassure the apprehensive political amateurs who were excited by absurd rumours of war.

‘William is in the first form at the Cassel Gymnasium. We think that the next two years, while he is growing up, will be beneficial to his development; he likes being there. Henry really seems to be taken with the idea of a sailor’s life; we shall therefore soon have to prepare him for this career.

‘Victoria sends you both her heartiest greetings; she is more diligent and successful than ever in drawing and painting, and does wonders in the way of portraits. The other day, in Silesia, she led her Hussar regiment past the King, which created a great impression, as she really accomplished her task splendidly, and looked exceedingly well in the simple and becoming uniform.’

Among all branches of science, the Crown Prince had a particular preference for history. He was, however, not content with merely studying the writings of others, but personally undertook a remarkable piece of work. Professor Hans Delbrück gives the following account of it :\*

‘I do not know who originated the idea of supplementing the Berlin Cathedral by the construction of a mausoleum for the Royal Family. The Crown Prince had adopted this scheme, and was full of it.

\* ‘Personal Reminiscences of the Emperor Frederick and his House,’ Berlin, 1888.

The Hohenzollern Vault was to be a Memorial Hall of Prussian history. The soldiers serving at Berlin, and every Prussian coming to Berlin and visiting the graves of his Sovereigns, were to be offered a kind of panoramic view of the wonderful history of this race, so intimately connected with that of the State. For this reason the Crown Prince conceived the idea of setting up statues of all the electoral Princes and Kings of Prussia, with a description of their character and government engraved upon the pedestal of each statue, while another side bore an account of the most remarkable events of their time, and a list of the territories that each had acquired for the State. He himself drew up these accounts. From old Pauli down to Droysen and Ranke and the innumerable existing monographs, he worked through the entire literature of the history of Prussia and of his House. When the first draft was ready, he would send it to historians, such as Ranke, Duncker, Droysen and others, and beg for their criticisms and suggestions. On the receipt of these, which sometimes amounted to considerable length, began the business of rewriting, every word and phrase being chosen and pondered with the most delicate care, and again examined after being put aside for a time. . . .

‘The work was interrupted by the Regency in 1878, and was not at once resumed when the duties of this office ceased, as the Crown Prince then devoted himself to the composition of memoirs of the period, which was, as he said, a more difficult task than might be supposed.

‘Great stress was everywhere laid upon Protestantism in the character sketches of the Sovereigns, and the

review of the most important events of each Government. I once ventured a query as to how far this were suitable in a memorial intended for all confessions of the nation. The Crown Prince, however, merely replied : " Well, surely we may be allowed to mention that we are Protestants."

'I am not aware how many of these character sketches were ever completed. I received the outline of that of Frederick William III. from San Remo, and sent back my remarks upon it with most melancholy feelings.

'As regards the contents and form of the sketches, it is sufficient to say that they resemble the splendid memorial dedicated by the Emperor Frederick to his father.

'Among the historians studied by the Crown Prince for the purposes of this undertaking, he grew to value Ranke the more he read him, although at first, I believe, he disliked him. He used to say, "Ranke has always the best way of expressing himself."

'His estimate of his ancestors was absolutely unbiassed. He naturally knew that there are times and occasions when everything can be said freely, and others when this is not advisable ; but he was quite free from that pseudo-patriotism which has so little self-confidence that it only manages to exist upon the basis of a false idealization of the past. He desired no floweriness and no concealment, but the simple historical truth. It is true that he once expressed his satisfaction that modern research upon King Frederick I. had brought many favourable points to light, as in his youth he had been taught to regard him as a man whose name could scarcely be mentioned

with propriety. Upon the other hand, however, he resolutely opposed the modern favourable view of Frederick William III. This King has had a curious fate in history. The traditional opinion was that the King's policy, both before and after 1806, was largely the result of irresolution and want of political energy, and had only turned to Prussia's advantage by the help of a propitious fate. Researches in the public records, by Duncker among others, brought about a reaction; and the vacillating attitude of the King, especially from 1809 to 1813, was now regarded as the fruit of supreme, or, at the least, praiseworthy, statesmanship. When I visited the Crown Prince the results of Duncker's researches had recently appeared, and I had adopted his views. The Crown Prince rejected them, however, with such decision that I was led to study Duncker's investigations very minutely while completing the biography of Gneisenau, and managed to refute a considerable portion of them.'

The Crown Prince conceived this idea of a memorial to his ancestors from an account of the museum at Castle Rosenborg, which he had visited while staying at Copenhagen in 1856. This museum contains portraits, weapons, furniture, clothes, and other souvenirs, of the various rulers and their chief contemporaries, each contained in separate rooms and arranged in chronological order. The Crown Prince was indefatigable in improving and adding to the Hohenzollern Museum. He devoted to this purpose anything that he found in the royal palaces which was in any way connected with the history of his House and the memory of his ancestors, and many of the objects lent or presented by him are accompanied by his own

superscriptions or explanations. The Museum was opened on March 22, 1877.

The Crown Prince's predilection for history led to his acceptance of the patronage of the Berlin Historical Society.

The services of the Crown Prince with regard to the history of ancient art will never be forgotten. The excavations at Olympia, in Greece, and Pergamon, in Asia Minor, were mainly owing to his exertions. He was an enthusiastic and powerful supporter of this marvellously successful undertaking, the fruits of which have enriched the entire civilized world. He was also successful in persuading both the Imperial Government and the Prussian Ministry to supply the necessary funds for the work.

The Crown Prince also used his powerful influence in favour of the German Anthropological Society, the patronage of which he assumed at the request of its president, Professor Virchow, soon after its foundation in the early seventies. As the society urgently required the enlargement of their collections for the purposes of comparative investigation, the Crown Prince prevailed upon the Government to invite the various German Embassies and Consulates abroad to take an active and systematic part in the enlargement of the collections.

In order to provide more accommodation for the collections, which increased considerably in course of time, the Ethnographical Museum was built at Berlin at the instigation of the Crown Prince (1880—1886).

In February, 1876, the Crown Prince and Princess spent a few days with the Royal Court of Saxony at Dresden, when the King conferred upon the Crown

Prince the colonelcy-in-chief of the 2nd Saxon Hussar Regiment.

The following letter from the Crown Prince to Prince Charles of Roumania was penned in May, 1876 :

‘ Ever since your last letter reached my hands, the rapt attention of Europe has been fixed on Stamboul and the seething Turkish provinces. This state of affairs reminds me of the time before 1864, when every conversation about the solution of the Schleswig-Holstein question ended thus: “Let us wish the Danish King long life, that the conflict may be delayed as long as possible.” But Frederick VII. died suddenly, and misfortune was at the door. The situation to-day is the more favourable, since none of the Great Powers have any longing to fight, because, God knows, enough blood has been shed these last few years. So far as we Germans are concerned, the Eastern Question possesses no immediate interest for us; our only care is the protection of our countrymen, on whose account our ironclad squadron is now cruising.

‘ The conference of the three Chancellors was a fresh proof to the world of the firm intention of the three Emperors to hold together, and, furthermore, that Austria’s German subjects cling to the German Empire, and hence compel the other provinces to follow their example. It remains to be seen how far the Porte will acquiesce in the arrangements. In any case, I regard it as a good sign that the States under Turkish suzerainty are making every effort to prevent insurrections and maintain peace. The financial difficulties of Turkey seem to point to her downfall, and Egypt is in the same plight. If England gains a firm

footing there, which I should be very pleased to learn, then much can be done without bloodshed; and I cherish the perhaps illusory hope that some day the Balkan peninsula will be governed by a Congress.

‘These thoughts of mine are the outcome of the situation, which seems less acute just at present, as the words of five great Powers, among whom England certainly does not appear as the friend of Turkey, naturally afford material for reflection.

‘Here the Imperial Government is passing a great many new laws; Prussia, too, is not idle in this respect, so the lawyers are beside themselves with work. But it is not to be wondered at that many thorough-going reforms have become necessary since the events of 1870 to 1871. The Empire is being welded together more firmly every year, almost without the assistance of the German Cabinets, some of whom are not particularly pleased by the speed with which the newly restored Empire has established itself. Those who assert that the Empire is aiming at a “Uniform State” to the detriment of the reigning Houses are mistaken. It is my opinion that the Federal form of government is consistent with the power and unity of the Empire; but the Sovereigns must recognise that we cannot permanently have in the army any small independent forces, exclusively dependent upon their own rulers in the matter of promotion, administration, etc. The much-debated acquisition of the railways by the State throughout the Empire is merely a question of time; it is inevitable, but must be well considered and gradually brought about, with due regard to all the privileges of the various Federal States. Those who clamour against the scheme at



present will then recognise the necessity of it, and will be able to judge it impartially.

‘I have good news to give you of my home circle. William got to the top of the first class at Easter, and early next year will pass his matriculation examination, and enter the service in the summer of 1877, afterwards probably attending the University. How time flies ! Henry keeps to his wish of entering the navy. Charlotte has just returned from England in good health and spirits ; she was there to see my brother-in-law, the Prince of Wales, arrive home from his enviable trip to India. How I should like to go there !’

The Crown Prince and Princess spent the July of 1876 at Scheveningen, from whence they made many inland excursions to the various cities of the Netherlands, rich in works of art and no less remarkable from a historical point of view. They also paid a visit to the Health Exhibition at Amsterdam.

The sixtieth anniversary of the octogenarian Prince Frederick of the Netherlands as Grand Master of the Freemasons was celebrated at the Hague on July 27. The Crown Prince was present, as well as many deputations from Dutch and foreign Lodges. The festival speech was made by Brother Lenting, a member of the Lower Chamber, who sketched in eloquent terms the history of Dutch Freemasonry during the last sixty years. He laid stress upon the fact that Prince Frederick gave the lie to the calumnies of the Ultramontane press by retaining his office of Grand Master, notwithstanding their advice to the contrary effect. He held this up as an example to Freemasons, for a new struggle was approaching.

While Freemasonry sought to encourage the enlightenment of the nation, Ultramontaniam was on the side of darkness. Freemasonry did not attack the Catholic Church, but only Ultramontaniam, which endeavoured to render the State subservient to the Church, and to impede free intellectual development.

The speech was received with enthusiastic applause. After Prince Frederick had returned thanks, promising to be true to the Order while he lived, the German Crown Prince rose. After congratulating Prince Frederick, he continued as follows :

‘The differences of nationalities have created divisions in life. Freemasonry aims at love, tolerance and freedom without regard to these divisions. On this memorable day I am glad to have the opportunity of declaring my adherence to the principles of the Order, and of expressing the hope that it may be at length victorious in the struggle for popular enlightenment and intellectual liberty.’

In September the Crown Prince accompanied his father on his first visit to Alsace. It was observed with great approval that the Crown Prince placed himself quite in the background, and, as it were, constantly retired in favour of his father, to whom alone he desired all homage to be offered.

The congratulations of the Berlin magistracy on the occasion of his birthday were acknowledged by the Crown Prince with an allusion to the injury caused to industrial life by the system of company-promoting and by emphasizing the necessity of a return to sound economical principles.

When Landrath von Diest began his crusade against company-promoting at Berlin with the

pamphlet 'The Moral Basis in the Life of the State,' he received a letter of thanks on October 24 from the Crown Prince as 'Governor of Pomerania,' and on December 2 these thanks were repeated in the name of the Crown Prince, with the words that in the struggle against the moral and material injury notoriously caused to the nation by the system of company-promoting there could be no doubt as to his sympathies, though he was compelled to remain aloof from the conflict.

Another letter from the Crown Prince to the Roumanian ruler, on November 8, 1876, ran as follows :

'Our eyes are turned in suspense towards the south-eastern corner of Europe, and we are greatly relieved at the prospects of an armistice. May Heaven soon grant peace, and preserve us from the incalculable consequences of the Eastern Question. . . .

'My letter was already closed, when I received the following from Prince Bismarck, to whom I had given an account of your letter. I transcribe it here literally, as it is sure to interest you :

“The situation of the Prince is serious, although I am not convinced that Russia will proceed to war if nobody endeavours to restrain her from doing so. . . .

“In the event of war, I do not think Prince Charles ought either to resist the Russian proposals too seriously or throw himself into their arms. It would be best if he shielded himself behind his duty towards the Porte, and then yielded to force, which will probably be applied from the North long before Turkey assumes the offensive.

“He must not allow himself to be led away by

ambition, but must adhere to the treaties ; his resources are not sufficient in the face of two such armies to secure him the respect of the victor, if he employs his forces. So long as he adheres to the treaties, he can always appeal to Europe. That will always be a claim, though not perhaps an indisputable one ; still, it will carry great weight should the Russian campaign prove unfortunate eventually. I offer my opinion here as if I were a Roumanian and not a German Minister, solely on account of my personal interest for his Highness.”

January 1, 1877, was the seventieth anniversary of the Emperor William's entry into the Prussian Army. The Crown Prince performed the task of congratulating the Emperor in the name of the German Army in the Knights' Hall of the Berlin palace, in the presence of many German Princes, Field-M Marshals, and Generals of the army. In an eloquent and enthusiastic speech the Crown Prince referred to his august father as ‘ the model of all glorious virtues, and the creator of that new order of things which has helped to add to Prussia's fame, and to firmly establish Germany's greatness once more.’

Prince William, the eldest son of the Crown Prince, passed his matriculation examination in January at Cassel, and on February 9 he received his commission in the 1st Foot Guards. Upon this occasion the Crown Prince addressed the following words to the officers of the regiment :

‘ Having undergone the training of your regiment, I am well acquainted with the admirable spirit that prevails in it, and I trust that this will be maintained. I congratulate my son upon joining your ranks. He

knows of the glorious deeds of two wars in which the regiment acted worthily of its old renown. I can therefore say that my son may well be proud to wear the uniform, which I wore during my service, and I hereby place him in your hands.'

In conclusion the Crown Prince advised his son to bear in mind the words which he had heard that morning from the lips of the Emperor.

The Crown Prince next advanced with his son to the 6th Company, saluted the men, and said: 'It is a great pleasure to me that my son is called upon to serve in the same company which I had the honour to command for a year and a half, a period connected with the pleasantest recollections of my early military career.'

There soon followed more happy days in the family of the Crown Prince. At the end of March, 1877, Prince Henry and Princess Charlotte were confirmed, and on April 1 the Emperor William announced at the family dinner-table the betrothal of Princess Charlotte with the Hereditary Prince Bernhard of Saxe-Meiningen.

In April the Crown Prince and Princess and Prince William visited Kiel for the purpose of being present at the entry of Prince Henry into the navy.

The ceremony took place upon April 21 on board the training-ship *Niobe*. In reply to a speech by Von Stosch, the chief of the Admiralty Department, the Crown Prince said that he entrusted his son to the young navy with the confident hope that he would prove an assistance to its development and would help to gain for the navy, when called upon, that fame which the army had already won.

During a tour of the provinces with his illustrious father, the University students at Strasburg gave the Crown Prince a hearty welcome, and he was well received by the inhabitants everywhere. His pleasant manners won the hearts of all. On one occasion the Crown Prince happened to notice a little girl crying because she could not see what was going on; he lifted her up and held her several minutes in his arms to show her the Emperor and the other celebrities.

When the Emperor and his son revisited the battle-fields round Metz, they were struck with the large number of victims which the war had claimed. Everywhere in the gardens and fields and along the roads whitewashed crosses of wood were planted on the separate graves, and were visible from a considerable distance. After visiting the neighbourhood, the Crown Prince remarked that he felt as if he had been walking for hours in an endless cemetery. He spoke with abhorrence of the terrible butchery which had marked the engagements.

In December, 1877, the Crown Prince wrote the following long letter to Prince Charles of Roumania :

‘ I postponed sending you my best thanks for your letter, because I should have liked to add congratulations for a great success, as the fall of Plevna was said to be on the point of taking place. But as it has not yet happened, I have at last set to work to write to you, and begin by telling you that I think of you every day, and am glad to picture you fighting so honourably and successfully at the head of the army you yourself created.

‘ The motives of the war have nothing to do with it, for I am only speaking of yourself, my dear old

friend, and so will only add that I hope that great benefits may arise for you from this fearful sacrifice of human life. How it will come about, nobody knows, and the Danube will carry a great deal of water to the sea before any tangible result of peace takes place !

‘ Weeks ago, before I received your letter, I saw from your dispositions for the storming of Plevna what good use you were making of the experience gained in 1864. From your account of events I see my opinions confirmed, and am rejoiced that one of our race should have managed to gain such speedy recognition and confidence during the critical period of complications at the seat of war. The Emperor read your letter with the greatest interest, and entirely shares my views ; as we get but scanty reports, the contents of which are naturally conceived with a due regard to the number of eyes that read them before they pass the Danube, a private letter like yours brings the most welcome enlightenment upon many points.

‘ Although the superior numbers of the Russian troops will certainly gain many advantages in course of time, the important fact remains that *your help* had to be requested. The truth of the old saying has again been proved, that when fighting one should not undervalue one’s antagonist. The Turks, whose bravery behind entrenchments has passed into a proverb, were probably more astonished at their victories than anyone else ; they would assuredly do much more if palace intrigues at Constantinople did not interfere and cause changes of personnel. . . .

‘ I had got so far in spite of numerous interruptions, when the news arrived of the fall of Plevna, which is



greatly to the honour of your soldiers and yourself. Receive my heartiest congratulations upon this new achievement! What a satisfaction, after the long and weary time of waiting, to help in gaining such a victory and overcoming such a brave and skilful enemy!

‘We as yet have only short telegraphic reports, but they state that there was some sharp fighting before Osman surrendered, and that you seem to be the one to whom he was referred with regard to the capitulation.

‘I can imagine your state of mind: joy at the victory, grief for the many victims, hope of a new era for Roumania, and yet great uncertainty as regards the immediate future. May everything turn out for the best for you, and strengthen your position when peace is made at last.

‘I am with you in thought continually, and can fancy your satisfaction at having now taken a prominent part in a great war, after you had been obliged to remain aloof from your native land in 1866 and 1870-71. I think, too, of Elisabeth’s joy, and the feeling of pride that must inspire her at having been at your side through such events as these. We are always hearing with much pleasure of her devoted labours in sick-nursing, for nothing can raise her more in the general estimation than the fact of her giving such an example while you were fighting. Please tell her all this from me. . . .

‘We are still waiting impatiently for news of the effect of the fall of Plevna upon the further course of the war. Most people think that Turkey will resist to the last before parting with any portion of her

territory, although the losses in men, money, and artillery must be immense.

‘The situation at Lom is very strange, with the two armies standing face to face watching each other, and the Grand-Duke still not having succeeded in striking a decisive blow.

‘But enough of this. I am now going to send off this antiquated epistle, or you will think I have forgotten you.

‘In strictest confidence I add the remark that, *for political reasons*, the Emperor thinks it wiser to reply to your kind offer of the Order after peace has been made. You will comprehend the motives which compel us to preserve the *status quo* until, by the help of your military achievements, a new order of things is inaugurated in accordance with political justice.

‘Only these stringent reasons could induce us to reply for the moment in this manner to a beloved relative like yourself—*that* you will understand.’

The New Year brought mourning to the whole of Italy. King Victor Emmanuel passed away upon January 9, 1878. The Crown Prince travelled to Rome with his suite for the purpose of representing the Emperor at the funeral ceremony and saluting the Crown Prince Humbert as King. On reaching the Italian frontier, he addressed the following telegram to the new Sovereign :

‘Before crossing the frontier, I wish all happiness to you, to Margherita, and to Italy. I pray that Providence may direct your government. Receive the embrace of your brother Frederick William.’

On the arrival of the Crown Prince, the streets of Rome were thronged by an enthusiastic multitude,

whose cries of 'Long live the Prince of Prussia!' burst forth again and again as the Prince's carriage slowly progressed through the throng of people. It was evident that the cordial and friendly relations between Germany and Italy had received new vigour from the presence of the Crown Prince. After the ceremony of taking the oath on January 19, King Humbert and his consort returned to the Quirinal, where a large and enthusiastic crowd assembled. The King and Queen showed themselves upon the balcony, and were received with acclamations, which continued until Their Majesties again appeared with their son, the young Prince of Naples, hand-in-hand with the Crown Prince, who lifted him up and showed him to the people. At this the cheering broke out again more loudly than before.

Again the Crown Prince wrote to Prince Charles of Roumania, on January 29 :

'Everyone is in suspense at present at the delay in the conclusion of an armistice ; this dilatoriness almost gives one the impression that time is purposely being allowed to elapse in order to facilitate the march of the Russians to Stamboul. I only hope that no false peace will be made, for it will only end badly. But with anything that Ignatiev has a hand in one must be prepared for surprises. . . .

'I was delighted when the Emperor told me that he had conferred the "*Pour le Mérite*" upon you, for you have really thoroughly deserved it. I am always saying here how proud I am that one of our race was urgently implored for help by the Russians, and that it is necessary to speak of the Russo-Roumanian army in reference to the victory at Plevna.

I said this lately at Court to your old corps, which Fritz now commands, as you know. . . .

‘My hasty visit to Rome for the funeral of King Victor Emmanuel showed me that a united nation feels itself one also in grief, and is resolved to follow the path of national progress undismayed. Umberto has all the qualities requisite for making a good ruler, but is as yet little known in the country ; that will not injure him, however, if recognition follows later.’

After the marriage of Princess Charlotte, the eldest daughter of the Crown Prince, with the Hereditary Prince Bernhard of Saxe-Meiningen, on February 18, 1878, the Crown Prince came to England in the middle of May. While in London, he received a deputation of German artisans at the German Embassy, who presented an address of congratulation at the escape of the Emperor William (May 11).

The Crown Prince, after thanking the deputation, conversed for some time with the men, and inquired their various trades. He shook hands with a carpenter, saying, ‘I am a carpenter too.’ ‘I know,’ answered the man ; ‘the Hohenzollerns all learn a trade in their youth—in honour of labour.’ The Crown Prince rejoined in the words of the poet : ‘The King’s honour lies in his royal office, but ours in the labour of our hands.’

In February, 1878, Herr August Schneegans, with several other Alsatian members of the Reichstag, had an audience with Prince Bismarck about the question of establishing a separate Government for Alsace-Lorraine. The Prince was of opinion that the best solution of the question would be for the Crown Prince

of the German Empire to exercise the sovereignty in the name of the Emperor. Herr Bergmann, the member for Strasburg, was the first to reply to the Chancellor by stating that the 'Crown Prince' plan was very favourably received, but there was some uncertainty as to the way in which it was to be carried out. Prince Bismarck answered as follows :

'I have not solicited the Emperor's opinion upon the question. As you know, the question of the nomination of the Crown Prince as ruler of Alsace-Lorraine has been raised several times by the press. These articles are, however, inaccurate in one respect, for they talked of a vicegerency of the Crown Prince as representative of the Emperor, but this vicegerency is not proposed. The Crown Prince is to be your ruler ; he is to act in every way like the Emperor, but to live in the province. The objection has been raised that the Crown Prince cannot reside in Alsace-Lorraine, as he is also Crown Prince of Prussia ; still he need not live there permanently, but only for part of the year. You will make no progress with the idea of Imperial administration as a Crownland ; what you require is the government of the country by the country itself.'

At the beginning of May, 1878, Herr Schneegans was informed by Herr Stauffenberg that 'the Crown Prince's country was ready,' when suddenly the attempt upon the Emperor's life produced an unexpected turn of events : the Crown Prince was entrusted with the management of affairs and the office of Regent. The Alsatian 'Crown Prince' project was pushed into the background, and another solution was proposed by the nomination of an Imperial Governor.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE CROWN PRINCE AS REGENT

1878

It has already been mentioned that the Crown Prince considered it wiser to abstain from taking any active part in the affairs of the Government. He adhered to this principle even when he happened to be present at a Cabinet Council. At one of these meetings, shortly before Hüdél's attempt upon the Emperor's life, the monarch inquired what the Crown Prince thought about a certain matter, with the words : 'And what is your opinion, Fritz ?' The Prince rose and replied : 'I beg to be excused from expressing any opinion.'

The passivity of his attitude did not, however, cause him to refrain from following the course of home and foreign politics with the greatest eagerness. The advanced age of his august father, and the consequent probability of his own accession to the throne before very long, possibly induced him to give his undivided attention to these matters ; but his own strong predilection for politics was the chief cause of this keen interest in internal and international affairs. The Crown Prince was a politician by nature. His diary of the war of 1870-71, and many of his letters to

Prince Charles of Roumania, show unmistakably with what intense interest he watched the course of events. For many years he had been gradually evolving a definite political programme, which he kept continually in view. It might be summed up in the words : 'A powerful German Empire under the enlightened government of the Hohenzollers.' Any person ready to help him in this work was the right man for the Crown Prince, be his name Forckenbeck, Roggenbach, Stosch or Bismarck.

His sympathy with the tenets of Freemasonry, and the steadfast sincerity of his nature, caused him to feel an instinctive repulsion for all movements, political or otherwise, of a reactionary or intolerant nature. All narrow-minded adherence to party doctrines or to selfish class interests was thoroughly distasteful to him, for he regarded it as his first duty to devote himself to the general weal and woe. He stood upon a level of ethical development which impelled him to think and act morally in great as well as in small matters, in private as well as in public life, and not least in the sphere of politics.

Professor Delbrück, who, as tutor to Prince Waldemar, lived for five years in the family of the Crown Prince, and had therefore exceptional opportunities for acquiring a thorough knowledge of his ideas upon the subject of class differences, writes :

'The Crown Prince was thoroughly national in sentiment, but stood far above all party feeling. It is even impossible to say that he was a Liberal, as far as the word represents a party bias. It would be better to say that he had a freer and more tolerant view of existing affairs than the classes which usually surround



royalty. He always felt as a Prussian soldier, and with him, as with his father, the ruling idea was that of being an officer, and afterwards a commander of the Prusso-German Army. He lamented the fact that his father's monarchical jealousy (the expression is strong, but represents the fact) held him aloof from the army after the wars. It was, however, his principle (and upon this point he has been invariably misunderstood) that this consciousness of a special position should not prevent his entering into free and unconstrained relations with every class and with every honest man of other views. This, combined with his adoption of the German national idea, brought him early into conflict with the old Prussian reactionary party. The members of this party were Particularists, not Nationalists, in their views, and they held that the King of Prussia should surround himself exclusively with personages of their own station and opinions. The Prince, however, even before he became Crown Prince, at the end of the fifties, rebelled against these narrow views. By intercourse, or at least contact, with Bunsen, Usedom, the two Vinckes, Saucken-Julienfelde, later on with Twesten and Hovenbeck, and through the influence of his father-in-law about the time of his marriage, he drew what is usually termed his middle-class Liberalism, but which, I repeat, is not properly understood, if it is regarded as a party matter. Its chief characteristic consists in tolerance towards all parties, and general personal intercourse without regard to party position. The question may, indeed, be raised as to how far a constitutional Sovereign is in a position to maintain a relationship which may be possible to a Crown Prince. . . . The Emperor Frederick's reign was too short for

the feasibility of his ideas to be actually tested. This tolerant leaning, however, really forms the key to the comprehension of his ideas. The Crown Prince was divided from the German Liberal party by views which I have heard from his own lips, not once, but on many occasions, in the words : " The army must never be a Parliamentary force ; it is royal, and must remain so ; " another time in the following form : " It would just suit them to make the army a Parliamentary force ! " ' "

Supported by his consort, the Crown Prince took the keenest interest in all efforts which aimed at bringing well-being and culture to wider circles of the community.

Herr Schrader, himself a prominent helper in this good work, writes as follows on this subject :

' In Germany as well as in other countries, no important progress could be made in social or educational matters without its coming to the knowledge of the Crown Prince or Princess. Thus, the royal couple have given a real moral, not merely material, encouragement to technical training and higher education, the industrial training of women, and many other similar undertakings.

' The Frederick William and Victoria Fund is intended for these objects, and will continue to assist them in the future. But although much had already been achieved by the Crown Prince and Princess, greater things were still in store for the future.

' It was only natural that the Crown Princess in particular should occupy herself with ideas directly or indirectly affecting education and development ; but the interest of the Crown Prince was always at

hand for her wise and kindly labours, and as often as his time allowed he would publicly declare how much he was in favour of education and instruction. How often has he visited the schools, sometimes alone and sometimes accompanied by the Crown Princess, and taken part in the examinations! Many a man cherishes the recollection of having been examined by his Emperor. At the Apprentices' Exhibitions he was a regular visitor, often appearing as a competent critic, but always as a warm friend.'

Among the undertakings of a philanthropic character which occupied the Crown Prince may be mentioned his exertions in favour of the material, intellectual, and moral advancement of women and of their industrial employment. In 1872 he supported a petition to the Reichstag for the admission of women into the railway, postal, and telegraphic service.

The Crown Prince was well aware of the power of the press, and always treated journalists with great cordiality. It created some sensation when he first received journalists and editors of the leading newspapers at Potsdam. At official ceremonies in Berlin he was often to be seen chatting with a group of journalists. Once at some great public function he asked the representatives of the press whether they were satisfied with the places assigned to them. Upon receiving a reply in the negative, he administered a severe reprimand to those responsible for the arrangements, concluding with the words: 'These gentlemen are more important than you are, for if they did not write about it, the world would know nothing of what is going on here to-day!'

The Crown Prince read the Radical *Volks-Zeitung*

by preference. When one of the higher Court officials, who had recently entered upon his duties, wished to get rid of the paper and replace it by one of a more moderate tendency, the Crown Prince ordered that no change should be made. To the objection, 'But, your Royal Highness, it is a regular revolutionary paper!' the Prince answered dryly: 'Never mind, my friend. I know full well what the Government thinks; I wish to know what other people think as well.'

While the Crown Prince and Princess were still in England, another attempt was made upon the life of the venerable Emperor, who was severely wounded by two shots while driving in the Unter den Linden. When the eminent surgeon, Herr von Langenbeck, arrived at the palace, he found the Emperor insensible through loss of blood. The Emperor's first words on recovering consciousness were:

'Telegraph to my son to come at once and take charge of affairs.'

Upon receiving the sad news, the Crown Prince and Princess left London at once, and arrived at Berlin the following day. The Emperor's condition was such as to prevent him from performing his royal duties for some time to come, and he therefore commissioned his son to assume control of the Government until he was restored to his health. This took place officially in the evening of June 4 in the presence of Prince Bismarck and the heads of the military and civil Cabinets.

'There is one duty which tells us to persevere, and a higher one which orders us to yield,' said the Emperor. As the Crown Prince kissed his hand, he

looked up at him, and said: 'I know that everything is in good hands, and I can rest easy.'

The Emperor desired that the Government should be carried on in accordance with his own views, and that nothing should be altered. The Crown Prince at first felt some hesitation with regard to the arrangements for his temporary representation of his father, but the difficulty was soon overcome by Prince Bismarck.

The Crown Prince immediately held a Council meeting, in which the special measures called for by the unusual situation were discussed. It was decided to propose the dissolution of the Reichstag to the Federal Council. In consequence of Hödel's attempt, the draft of a law against Social-Democratic excesses was laid before the Reichstag, to empower the Federal Council to prohibit societies and their meetings for the space of three years, as well as to confiscate all printed matter of Social-Democratic tendencies.

These powers were of a very vague description, and the various Governments might be enabled to suppress any kind of public action objectionable to them. The National Liberals unanimously resolved to reject the Socialist Bill in this form, though ready to support the Government in a future scheme having more regard to the general freedom of the people. The Bill was rejected by 251 votes to 34.

Half or more of the Ministers—at any rate, the majority of the Ministry and Council together—voted adversely to Bismarck against dissolution, on the ground that the present Parliament, now that Nobiling's attempt had followed on Hödel's, would be prepared

to reverse its recent vote and meet the views of the Government.

The Crown Prince was by no means desirous that Bismarck should give up the reins of government.

'I was certain,' remarks Bismarck in his 'Reflections and Reminiscences' (vol. ii., p. 202), 'that the Crown Prince would accept my view, even if all my colleagues had been of a different opinion. . . . I intended to remain at my post, because, if the Emperor were to recover from his severe wound, which was by no means certain in the case of so old a man after his serious loss of blood, I would not forsake him against his will. I also regarded it as my duty, if he should die, not to refuse to his successor, unless he wished it, those services which the confidence and experience I had acquired enabled me to render him.'

Bismarck goes on to assert that at that time a plan actually existed for replacing him by a Cabinet *à la* Gladstone, whose mission is indicated by the names of Stosch, Eulenburg, Friedenthal, Camphausen, Rickert, etc. But, at the same time, he remarks that this combination was unsuccessful, because they failed to win over either the King or the Crown Prince. 'As to the latter's relations with me, my place-hunting opponents were always misinformed at that time, and afterwards again in 1888. To the end of his life he maintained the same confidence in me as his father.'

At that time Bismarck was desirous of proclaiming a state of siege in Berlin, but failed to gain the consent of the Crown Prince to this measure. The Crown Prince gave a short report upon affairs of State to his father every day, naturally touching upon such

matters only as the monarch could learn without harm in his state of health.

At the beginning of February, 1878, Pope Pius IX. had passed away ; and his successor, Pope Leo XIII., in announcing his elevation to the Holy See, expressed his regret that the friendly relations which had formerly existed between Prussia and the Papacy no longer obtained. The Emperor William replied to the Pope by a conciliatory letter. The Pope wrote again, expressing a hope that the former good understanding might be renewed, and suggesting as a means to this end the alteration of various constitutional and legal regulations. The Crown Prince, as representative of the Emperor, addressed the following letter to His Holiness :

‘BERLIN,

‘June 10, 1878.

‘My father, the Emperor, is unfortunately still unable to thank your Holiness personally for your condolence upon the attempt of the 2nd instant ; I therefore gladly embrace it as one of my first obligations to thank you sincerely in his stead for the expression of your friendly sentiments.

‘The Emperor postponed replying to your Holiness’s letter of April 17 in the hope that in the meantime confidential explanations might render it possible to refrain from the written expression of differences of principle, which is unavoidable in a continuance of the correspondence in reference to your Holiness’s letter of April 17. By the contents of the latter I am unfortunately compelled to understand that your Holiness feels unable to fulfil the hope expressed in my father’s letter of March 24, that your Holiness would recom-



mend the servants of your Church to submit to the laws and authorities of the country.

‘No Prussian Sovereign can comply with the desire, expressed in your letter of April 17, of bringing the Laws and Constitution of Prussia into accordance with the statutes of the Roman Catholic Church. The independence of the monarchy, the maintenance of which I am bound to respect as my father’s heir and as a duty to my nation, would suffer diminution if the free action of its Legislature were rendered subject to any external Power.

‘Although it is, therefore, not in my power, and perhaps not in that of your Holiness, to adjust a difference of principle which has been more perceptible in the history of Germany than in that of other countries for a thousand years, I am still ready to treat the difficulties arising on both sides from the conflicts handed down to us by our forefathers in the spirit of peace and conciliation, which is the result of my Christian convictions.

‘Presuming that your Holiness will meet me in this wish, I shall not abandon the hope that where an accordance of principle is impossible, yet conciliatory feelings on both sides may open for Prussia the way to peace which was never closed to other States.

‘I beg your Holiness to accept the expression of my personal devotion and veneration.

‘FREDERICK WILLIAM,  
Crown Prince.

‘VON BISMARCK.

‘To His Holiness Pope Leo XIII.’

The result of this letter was the commencement of

negotiations between the German Government and the Papal Court, which formed the starting-point of an improvement in the mutual relations of both parties, and opened a prospect of agreement on the debated question.

A deputation of the Berlin municipal authorities presented an address through their Burgomaster, Herr Duncker, expressing their sorrow at the criminal attempts upon the life of the venerable Emperor. The Crown Prince said in reply :

‘ You may rest assured, gentlemen, that I am fully conscious of the gravity of the situation, and also of the magnitude of my responsibility to the country. But you may also rest assured that my confidence in the nation is unshaken and can never be removed. I know that the overwhelming majority of the Prussian nation is loyal to its King, just as those beyond the boundaries of the narrower Fatherland, to the furthest limits of the Empire, are loyal to their Emperor, and from my firm belief in the attachment of the people I shall derive strength and courage for the performance of the duties laid upon me.’

The Crown Prince issued the order for the dissolution of the Reichstag on June 9, which he based on the resolution passed by the Federal Council. He also received the representatives of foreign States at that time at Berlin for the purpose of attending the Congress, which was to decide the conditions of peace between Russia and Turkey.

The Berlin Congress was opened by Prince Bismarck in the Chancellor’s Palace on June 13. In the evening the delegates of the Congress, as well as the Ambassadors at Berlin and their suites, were invited

to a gala dinner in the White Hall of the Royal Palace. The Crown Prince made the following speech :

‘Le Congrès réuni à Berlin a bien voulu inaugurer ses travaux en exprimant des vœux pour le rétablissement de Sa Majesté l’Empereur, mon auguste père. Je remercie les représentants des Puissances de cette marque de sympathie. Au nom de mon auguste père j’exprime le désir de voir leurs efforts couronnés par une entente qui sera le meilleur gage de la paix universelle. Au nom de Sa Majesté je bois aux Souverains et aux gouvernements dont les représentants se sont réunis à Berlin.’

The Congress completed its labours in a month. By its negotiations the peace of Europe, especially between Russia and Turkey, was established upon a new and firm basis, through the alteration of the stipulations contained in the treaty of San Stefano.

At the time of the wreck of the ironclad *Grosser Kurfürst* in the Channel, British sailors and the local authorities had taken a prominent part in the rescue and support of the shipwrecked crew. This incident was the occasion of the following official letter from the Crown Prince to Queen Victoria :

‘BERLIN,

‘July 13, 1878.

‘The grievous loss recently sustained by the German Navy and the entire German nation by the wreck of the ironclad *Grosser Kurfürst* with several hundred brave sailors near the English coast, whereby your Royal and Imperial Majesty’s officials and subjects have given such active expression to their sympathy with this misfortune and with the victims of it, from the first moment until the present

day, made it my duty to acquaint His Majesty the Emperor and King, my father, with the facts of the case, as soon as his state of health permitted of a reference to this melancholy subject. In the Emperor's deep grief at the sad loss of so many human lives and the accident to one of his ironclads, nothing could be of greater consolation to His Majesty than to learn the devotion with which the English population assisted in the rescue of the survivors and the burial of the drowned German officers and men, as well as the care for the support of their relatives, and how promptly your Majesty's naval authorities gave all possible and desirable assistance to the commanders of the German Squadron. In the hope that the spirit of friendship displayed so unmistakably upon this melancholy occasion may ever inspire and direct the relations between the two nations, His Majesty has commissioned me to communicate to your Royal and Imperial Majesty's Government the expression of his sentiments, which are shared by all classes of the German people in grateful recognition. As I myself had the opportunity of witnessing the splendid zeal with which first help was given to the victims immediately after the catastrophe, it is my desire and satisfaction to express to your Majesty my father's sentiments, which I share, and to offer on this occasion the renewed assurance of my highest esteem and most sincere attachment, with which I remain,

‘ Your Royal and Imperial Majesty's most  
devoted, etc.,

‘ FREDERICK WILLIAM, Crown Prince.

‘ To the Queen of the United Kingdom  
of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India.’

In August the Crown Prince spent a few weeks at Homburg with his family. While there the verdict of the Chamber of Justice, condemning Hödel to death, was laid before him, and he decided to let justice take its course. The report of the Ministry of State had been in favour of the death sentence.

After the second attempt upon the life of the Emperor, a committee, headed by General Field-Marshal Count von Moltke, started the suggestion of a penny collection from rich and poor throughout the Empire, the results of which were to be given to the Crown Prince under the name of *Wilhelmsspende*, for some charitable object. On September 15, in the presence of the committee, Count von Moltke was able to hand over to the Crown Prince the sum of 1,739,418 marks 45 pfennigs, subscribed by nearly twelve millions of people.

Under the skilful treatment of his physicians, the improvement in the condition of the Emperor William made such rapid progress in September that the monarch was able to attend the Cassel manœuvres with his son, and also the ceremony of unveiling the monument to King Frederick William III. at Cologne.

The dissolution of the Reichstag in June gave rise to a movement which profoundly stirred the German nation. Elections were carried on with ardour, and on September 9 the new Reichstag assembled to discuss the draft of an anti-Socialist law, proposed by the Government. This draft had been modified in several points by the demands of the National Liberals three months previously, but in other respects was unacceptable to this faction, as it not only outlawed Social Democracy in the abstract, but every

Social Democrat in particular. Prince Bismarck was at first disinclined to accept fresh conditions. In the event of the Bill being rejected, he proposed a second dissolution and fresh elections. On the very day before the definite agreement between the Government and the Reichstag upon the subject of the Socialist Bill, the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* characterized one of the most important conditions of the Liberals as unacceptable. If the Government had adopted this view, the rejection of the Bill would have been certain, and a conflict inevitable. But a few hours after this declaration on the part of the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* the news spread of the agreement of all parties. The cause of this happy turn of events was not examined into further by the press at the moment. But later on it transpired that the Crown Prince insisted upon an agreement with the undoubtedly loyal majority of the Parliament, and definitely rejected all representations in favour of a second dissolution of the Reichstag. Thus the Bill, somewhat toned down and limited to a term of two years and a half, was passed, and the Reichstag was closed on October 19.

Among the Liberal members it was well known that at that time the Crown Prince had frequent conversations with Forckenbeck upon the subject of political matters. In the presence of Stauffenberg and others he said to the Chief Burgomaster: 'I rely principally upon you in these times of trouble.'

An interesting letter from the Crown Prince to Prince Charles of Roumania is dated October 19, 1878. The father of the Roumanian ruler, Prince Charles Anthony of Hohenzollern, had written :

‘The Crown Prince has an almost impossible task before him ; he is obliged to carry on the Government in accordance with his father’s ideas, and very often has to act against his most cherished convictions.’

The Crown Prince wrote to the same effect :

‘ . . . My best thanks, though late, for your welcome and sympathetic letter in June. You felt, with us, what a heavy blow had fallen on us all, and rejoiced with us over the recovery of the dear Emperor, whom I found wonderfully well at Cassel and Baden. His freshness and mobility, his memory and spirits, are completely restored. Yet those who see him daily say that mental exertion still tires him easily, and that he is therefore very willing to avoid it. His resumption of official duties is thus postponed still further, so that I shall probably not be free from this burden until December, on his return from Wiesbaden to Berlin.

‘You know that you were much in my thoughts during the Congress, and afterwards, in the midst of that truly difficult period of negotiations about the cession of Bessarabia. But I purposely refrained from writing to you, because I did not know how I was to express myself in view of such events.

‘I was convinced that you would estimate the circumstances correctly, and be able to take matters as they are. The exchange of territory, however, hit you doubly hard, since only too many were anxious to throw suspicion on you for being an *immigrant* wanting in “patriotic feeling.” Thank Heaven ! the representatives of your country appear to have submitted with the necessary resignation, so that you have been relieved of a real trouble. May Roumania now speedily



realize all the advantages which may still be drawn from the Dobrudscha, though it offers but little, and may the construction of bridges, canals, and ports mark a new era in your rule! If such undertakings succeed, a true substitute will have been found for all you have given up, and one day the advantage may perhaps be on your side. This is my heart's desire.

'Russia's conduct, after the manful service you did for that colossal Empire, meets with censure on all sides. I do not understand the importance which they attach to that piece of land.

'But they have scarcely got their way, when Russia begins to stir up a question about Afghanistan, which again threatens the peace, though for the present only in Asia. As if enough blood had not been shed already! It is to be hoped that the good Ameer will listen to reason, but the general tension is nevertheless very great.

'A few days ago we bade farewell to Henry for two years. Seldom has a separation fallen so heavily on my heart as this. He proceeds round Cape Horn viâ Rio, and will then join his station in Japan.

'William has just returned from England and Scotland. He met Charlotte and Bernhard in Paris, where they amused themselves immensely in the strictest incognito.

'The girls are growing up, and are all likely to outgrow Charlotte, who is not very tall. She is living in the villa of the late Princess Liegnitz at Potsdam, so we see her every day.

'My wife and I are tolerably well, in spite of these troublous times, which in less than half a year have brought me a Peace Congress, marriages, special legis-

lation, dissolution of the Reichstag, elections, and the execution of a death-sentence.

‘In all these events I see God’s will that I should taste of everything that still is set before me. But it is not easy to exercise the rights and bear all the burdens of a monarch to the best of one’s ability and conscience without taking the sole responsibility. Tomorrow the Reichstag concludes its deliberations; let us hope that the law against Social Democracy marks the commencement of a radical cure, by means of which this evil may be overcome. It will, however, cost us much pains before we can rid ourselves of this abortion, which has increased with such incredible rapidity, since the teachings of this unhealthy society find a ready market; and the attempted assassinations, which will now multiply still more, show the direction taken by a misunderstood application.’

The Regency terminated in December, when the Emperor William returned to the capital in perfect health and vigour, and communicated to the Crown Prince his desire to resume the control of affairs of State.

In the following autograph letter the Emperor thanked his son for his late exertions:

‘MY DEAR SON,

‘When in the course of this year the criminal deed of a misguided being compelled me to abandon temporarily the duties of my royal calling, I entrusted to your Imperial and Royal Highness the control of State affairs in my stead, well knowing your invariable readiness to be of service to the Fatherland. I feel moved to express my warmest thanks to you for the

unfailing devotion and careful attention to my principles with which you have performed your duties. I was not deceived in my conviction that the difficult tasks of the Government in these troublous times would be accomplished under your Royal Highness's firm guidance for the national welfare; for I was enabled to watch the course of State affairs during this time with increasing satisfaction. The feelings of ease and confidence which I derived from my observations were chiefly instrumental in contributing to my speedy recovery. In humble gratitude to Divine Providence, by whose grace it has been granted me again to assume the duties of my royal calling, I hereby repeat my paternal thanks to you, together with my full recognition as Emperor and King of your loyal exertions. I feel assured that the German and Prussian people are moved by a like sentiment of gratitude towards you.

‘Your Imperial and Royal Highness’s  
affectionate father,

‘WILLIAM.

‘BERLIN,

‘December 5, 1878.’

As the Crown Prince had only been called upon to *represent* the monarch, that firm basis of action was naturally lacking in his case which a monarchical government possesses in the individual views and opinions and decisions of its head. These could not be unconditionally executed by the representative of a Government in which the presumptive will of the Sovereign and the existing system of government had to be taken into consideration. The difficulty of this

task was universally acknowledged, but from the first moment of the Regency until the last the Crown Prince rose to the requirements of his position. Never have important duties in a critical time been performed with greater conscientiousness. Public opinion was not chary in its praise of the Crown Prince's régime.

The year 1878 closed with a sad blow to the Crown Prince and Princess by the death of the Grand-Duchess Alice of Hesse, the sister of the Crown Princess. After losing her little daughter from diphtheria, and nursing three other children and her husband through the same complaint, she succumbed to it herself on December 14 after a short illness.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### MARRIAGE OF PRINCE WILLIAM, AND OTHER EVENTS

1879—1883

EARLY in the year 1879 a great affliction befell the Crown Prince and Princess by the death of their third son, Waldemar, who died on March 27 in his eleventh year. The young Prince, a bright boy of much promise, had been a great favourite with all the Royal Family, and his death was a source of great sorrow to them. Shortly after the funeral the Crown Prince and Princess left Berlin for Wiesbaden, accompanied by their children, to spend a few weeks in quiet retirement.

While mourning for her lost child, the Crown Princess longed intensely for her second son, Prince Henry, who was then abroad. Exposed as he was to many dangers on his voyage round the world, his mother felt the greatest anxiety, and implored the Emperor to allow her son to return home. He listened to her with feeling, but replied: 'Before he started I did not conceal from you the possible dangers that might befall the Prince. It was my duty to prepare you, his mother, for a long separation. But you persisted in your resolution that your

son should embark upon the voyage, and now, as I warned you beforehand, I cannot grant your wish by permitting him to return. He is in the service, and has been ordered to go upon this voyage; therefore it must be completed. As the Prince's grandfather, I am deeply grieved that, as Emperor, I am obliged to refuse your request.'

Whilst at Kissingen the Crown Prince was cheered by the news of the birth of his first grandchild, the Hereditary Princess of Saxe-Meiningen giving birth to a daughter.

The Prince and Princess of Roumania had expressed their sympathy upon the death of Prince Waldemar, and the Crown Prince expressed his gratitude in the following letter :

'Your kind and sympathetic letter, no less than Elisabeth's deeply touching verses, were very welcome to my poor wife and myself. You both feel with and for us, for God decreed a like trouble for you, and even though your fate was much harder, still, we all have to bear the heavy destiny of surviving our children.

'We endeavour to bear God's decree with resignation, but we cannot even now become reconciled to the loss of another son from the happy circle of our family, a son, too, who justified our highest hopes, and already displayed character at an early age. It is so difficult to accustom ourselves to everyday life without our most dearly loved child, for every step reminds us that he will never appear again, and that we must learn to live without our companion. . . .

'Our life, which, moreover, has never been a tranquil one, had already become gloomy by the moving incidents of last year; with this sorrow it has

lost what remaining joy it still had to offer us, and we can only gather satisfaction from the execution of our tasks and duties.

‘ You very rightly lay stress upon the fact that such grief causes us more than ever to sympathize with others in their sorrow and to seek their society. Many other things are first apparent to us in our time of mourning, and it is certainly through the medium of this chastening that we are to be prepared for a higher calling, which appears dark and mysterious to dwellers on earth. It is not for us to inquire “ Why ? ” and yet we do so ; we are but human beings, to whom the work of Divine justice is hidden here, but will be made clear to us *there*. ’

Although the Crown Prince was in favour of pageant and ceremony taking their due share in worldly functions, his love for simplicity in spiritual matters is well authenticated. It is the custom in the Royal Chapels for the minister, upon entering the pulpit, to bow to any members of the Royal Family who may be present. The Crown Prince never permitted this form of personal homage in a sacred edifice, and every preacher who entered the pulpit at Bornstedt or Eiche had to be particularly cautioned upon this point. In answer to an inquiry upon the subject, the Crown Prince once said to his village pastor : ‘ What I told you once at Berchtesgaden holds good here as well ; I do not like any special honour to be paid to me in the presence of the Altar. Although we men are divided by rank and condition in everyday life, here in church we are all equal, all miserable sinners, and all children of God. ’

In the autumn of the same year the conclusion of a



defensive alliance with Austria took place. It is well known that Bismarck had great difficulty in gaining the Emperor William's consent to this alliance. The Chancellor was compelled to bring the Cabinet into play, a method of procedure very much against his grain. Though Bismarck succeeded in gaining the support of his colleagues, he was so worn out by the labours of the negotiations and the interruption of his Gastein cure as to be unfit to travel to Baden-Baden, where the Emperor William was staying. Count Stolberg went thither in his stead, and brought the negotiations to a successful issue, notwithstanding His Majesty's resistance. The Emperor was not to be convinced by arguments, but gave his promise to ratify the treaty only because he was averse to Ministerial changes. The Crown Prince was from the outset a strong advocate of the Austrian alliance, but in this matter had no influence upon his father.\*

The personal sentiments of the Crown Prince in this important political matter are reflected in the following passage from a letter written at the time (April 11, 1880), to Prince Charles of Roumania :

‘ Our *rapprochement* and understanding with Austria last autumn was, no doubt, under the circumstances, a correct step, and has given the Czar's Empire something to think about. If we could only succeed in preventing France from forming the ardently desired alliance with Russia—which has probably been postponed for some time—we might then see favourable guarantees for peace everywhere.

‘ No one wants war, because all have much to do at home, and have enough to think over in the con-

\* Bismarck's ‘ Reflections and Reminiscences,’ vol. ii., p. 268.

sequences of the last bloody war. Above all things, we Germans do not wish for war, since we gained far more by the last than we ever dared to hope for, and we anticipate no advantage from any extension.'

The betrothal of his son William, the present German Emperor, was announced in the same letter :

'Permit me to inform you and dear Elisabeth that the premature hints of the press regarding the betrothal of my eldest son, William, to Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein, eldest daughter of the late Fritz of Schleswig-Holstein-Augustenburg, are based on fact. Mutual and deep-seated inclination has brought the two together, and this fulfils the sincere wish of my wife and myself, to greet as our daughter-in-law a Princess so distinguished by gifts of mind, heart, and temperament, as well as by dignified grace. God grant that this union of hearts may one day be a blessing to the Empire.'

The official betrothal of Prince William and Princess Augusta Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein took place on June 2, 1880, at Schloss Babelsberg in the presence of the members of the Prussian Royal Family and the House of Augustenburg. The bride's father, Duke Frederick, had passed away in January at Wiesbaden. The last letter which he received from the Crown Prince gave him great pleasure, and only a few days before his death he spoke in the warmest terms of the Crown Prince's conduct towards himself.

Two years had now elapsed since Prince Henry embarked upon the corvette *Prinz Adalbert* for a voyage round the world. His safe return home at the end of September, 1880, was an occasion for great rejoicing in the Royal Family. 'It is like a dream to

have the dear boy back again!' the fond father exclaimed when his son was once more by his side.

On October 15 and 16, a ceremony took place which had been long looked forward to with romantic interest by the whole German nation. After more than seven centuries had elapsed since its foundation was laid, the Cologne Cathedral had at last reached completion. The event was celebrated in the presence of the Emperor and Empress, the Crown Prince and Princess, the King of Saxony, and many other royal guests. After the *Te Deum* the last stone was placed in the building amid a salute of cannon and the ringing of all the city bells. The following day a historical procession, arranged by eminent artists, took place in honour of the royal guests. At the banquet in the afternoon, the Crown Prince made a striking speech.

'The building of the cathedral,' said the Prince, 'was commenced at a brilliant period of our national history; the people of Germany have experienced many vicissitudes of fortune in those long centuries during which it has been in process of completion. To our own generation it has at length been granted to see the work perfected. May it encourage us all to hold fast by our highest national possessions, our German character and modes of thought, our German God-fearing piety, our German earnestness in work and in the pursuit of art and science! And may it be ever a symbol of our German loyalty and unity! As the whole nation has combined to produce this building, so may it endure for many generations, a German work reared for the delight of a great, a happy, and a peace-loving people! . . .'

The marriage of Prince William with Princess

Augusta Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein took place on February 27, 1881. The occasion was celebrated by magnificent festivities, for this union excited the greatest interest throughout the German Empire, and was joyously heralded as an alliance of auspicious import. Nor did it escape popular notice that by this marriage the House of Augustenburg would, after all, find some sentimental compensation for the loss of the Elbe Duchies in the brilliant future which awaited the Princess on the throne of the German Empire. Prince William had not only made a love match like his father, but he had found his bride in Germany. During a visit to Primkenau, the family seat of the Augustenburg family in Silesia, he openly expressed his pride at his alliance with a Princess of so illustrious a German stock.

On March 13 the Czar Alexander II. of Russia fell a victim to a dastardly Nihilist conspiracy. The Crown Prince was commissioned by the Emperor to represent him at the funeral ceremony in St. Petersburg. By the express desire of the Russian Court the Crown Prince proceeded at once to St. Petersburg, where a splendid reception awaited him. The letters and telegrams exchanged at this time between the Courts of St. Petersburg and Berlin were marked by particular cordiality.

The Crown Prince spent the months of July and August of 1881 with his family at the English Court. In response to an invitation from the Prince of Wales, he was present at the inaugural meeting of the International Medical Congress at London, and later at the banquet at Willis's Rooms. Upon this occasion the health of the Crown Prince was drunk, for which

he returned thanks in English in the following words :

‘In rising to reply to this gratifying expression of feeling, I cannot refrain from saying what pleasure it gives me to find myself in the company of so many distinguished men of different countries assembled in the cause of science and humanity.

‘None more than myself knows how great is the debt of gratitude due to those who have taken up the trying, arduous, and responsible duties so wholly absorbing all the faculties of heart and brain which a man can possess.

‘The studies involved in this pursuit are most serious and overwhelming ; but the good that has been done by the untiring zeal of the profession is the bright and cheering side of this work ; and the astonishing progress of medical science is the earnest of brilliant success for the future.’

In the autumn of 1881 the Crown Prince had several lengthy interviews with Prince Bismarck. One of the most momentous departures in the history of modern Germany was in the air : the Chancellor’s vast project of social legislation. It was impossible to predict whether the great scheme for the insurance of working men would be completed during the reign of the Emperor William, who was now in his eighty-fifth year, and great importance was therefore attached to the assent of the Heir-Apparent to the projected arrangements. The memorable message of November 17, 1881, in which the Emperor once more\* urged upon the Reichstag the active promotion of the pros-

\* This had already been done in the Speech from the Throne of February, 1881.

perity of the labouring classes as a remedy for socialistic evils, and which was intended to show that the Emperor supported the Chancellor's policy with the whole weight of his authority, was the result of deliberations with the Crown Prince as well as with the Emperor.

This was the beginning of a far-reaching change, destined to exert great influence in the shaping of German domestic affairs in the future. About the same time another matter of weighty import came to the fore. A general desire for peace with the Roman Catholic Church had become more marked from year to year, and conciliatory sentiments prevailed at Rome towards Prussia and Germany. Thus a peaceful issue of long-pending differences was at last in view. The Crown Prince and the Chancellor also came to an understanding upon this point.

A joyful event took place on the 6th of May, 1882, when a son was born to Prince and Princess William. The imperial great-grandfather telegraphed as follows to the Crown Prince :

‘God be praised and thanked! Four generations of Kings living! What a rare occurrence! God protect the mother and child!—WILLIAM.’

The Crown Prince's old nurse, Dorothea Wagner, who was still living at Berlin, was present at the baptism of his grandson upon June 11.

A Universal Health Exhibition for Germany was planned for the year 1882 at Berlin, with the Crown Prince as president. The aim of the Exhibition was to display collections of all kinds of remedies and inventions having reference to the preservation of health,

the prevention of accidents, and the saving of life. A few days before the opening of the Exhibition a fire broke out in the building, and destroyed the greater portion of the exhibits. The committee of the Exhibition were at first inclined to abandon the enterprise, but the energetic opposition of the Crown Prince and his encouraging words had the effect of carrying on the work. The Exhibition was opened in May, 1883, and proved a great success.

January 25, 1883, was the twenty-fifth anniversary of the marriage of the Crown Prince and Princess. Far beyond the wide circle, which could boast of personal relations with the royal pair, loyal hearts were gladdened by the thought that the Crown Prince and Princess were about to celebrate their silver wedding in the happy enjoyment of all the blessings of home life. Preparations had been made throughout the country to present the royal couple with countless offerings upon the auspicious occasion.

A year previously, when the first news appeared of the gifts which various associations and corporations were preparing for the silver wedding of the Crown Prince and Princess, an intimation was given to the effect that the royal pair wished that all offerings destined for this purpose should be devoted to the poor and needy throughout the country.

The unexpected decease of the Emperor's brother, Prince Charles of Prussia, unfortunately threw a gloom over the anniversary. In consequence of the Court going into mourning, the festivities were confined to a congratulatory reception. Berlin, however, was gaily decorated with flags, and magnificently illuminated at night, while large crowds filled the streets and



thronged the space in front of the Crown Prince's palace.

Some months previously a committee had been formed with the object of collecting a sum of money throughout the Empire, to be offered to the Crown Prince and Princess on their silver-wedding day, with the request that it might be employed for charitable purposes at their own discretion. The sum thus gathered amounted to 830,000 marks. A deputation of the committee presented the announcement of the collection upon February 16, 1883. The city of Berlin had collected the sum of 200,000 marks in honour of the silver wedding, of which 118,000 marks were destined to the erection of a Nursing Institute.

The last week of February witnessed the festivities which had been prepared in honour of the silver wedding, but which had been postponed on account of the death of Prince Charles. The desire for an outward manifestation of the joy in which the whole nation shared, which had been repressed for a time, now asserted itself with double force. A large number of royal guests arrived at Berlin for the occasion, including the King of Saxony, the Prince of Wales, and the Crown Prince of Austria.

On the evening of February 24 the Crown Prince and Princess held a reception at the Royal Palace to receive the congratulations of the representatives of foreign Sovereigns, Generals, Ministers, Court officials, the clergy, representatives of Parliament, of the City and University, and deputations of officers.

The chief festivity took place upon February 28 in the royal palace; a splendid procession in medieval costumes, arranged by the artists of Berlin, took place,

followed by supper and a ball. The royal procession entered the White Saloon headed by the Crown Prince and Princess; the Crown Prince wore the uniform of the Queen's Cuirassiers, and the Crown Princess was in white satin, the train of which was trimmed with silver lace. The Queen of Saxony was escorted by His Majesty the Emperor in the red uniform of the Gardes du Corps. Scenes from the days of the troubadours at the Court of Charles the Bold of Burgundy were enacted, followed by an English procession in costumes of the time of Queen Elizabeth; finally a long procession of German, Italian, and Dutch painters of the time of the Renaissance appeared, to offer homage to the royal pair as patrons of the arts.

On the occasion of the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther in September, a commemorative festival was held at Wittenberg by the Protestant clergy of Germany. The Crown Prince, accompanied by Prince Albert of Prussia, arrived at Wittenberg on September 13. After attending the festival service in the Stadtkirche, he visited the Schlosskirche to lay a laurel wreath upon the grave of the Reformer, and afterwards went to the Town Hall, where a number of interesting relics of Luther were exhibited.

After the manœuvres of the 4th Army Corps near Merseburg, the Crown Prince followed his father to Homburg, where the manœuvres of the 11th Army Corps were to take place. While the Emperor was staying at Homburg King Alfonso XII. of Spain paid him a visit, and in return was invited to be present at the manœuvres. Upon leaving, the Emperor conferred upon him the coloneley of the Schleswig-Hol-

stein Uhlan Regiment (No. 15), quartered at Strasburg. In Paris these events recalled to mind the Hohenzollern candidature for the throne of Spain in 1870, and caused extreme agitation, which led to offensive attacks upon Germany and Spain in the press. Menaces were employed against King Alfonso, and on passing through Paris on his homeward journey he was the subject of deplorable insults. The agitation was somewhat cooled by a newspaper report that the Crown Prince was about to return the visit of the King of Spain. The official announcement soon followed that Lieutenant-General von Loë had left for Spain, in order to announce the visit of the Crown Prince to the Court of Madrid.

Early in October the Crown Prince and Princess started upon a tour in Switzerland and Northern Italy, visiting the King and Queen of Italy at Monza, and the Prince of Hohenzollern at his residence near Lake Constance, where the Crown Prince spent his birthday before returning to Berlin at the beginning of November. On the 17th the Crown Prince and his suite left for Spain to pay the promised visit to King Alfonso.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE CROWN PRINCE'S ILLNESS

1883—1888

ACCOMPANIED by General Count Blumenthal and other officers, the Crown Prince quitted Berlin on November 17, 1883, and travelled viâ Frankfort, Bâsle and Milan to Genoa, where the royal palace had been placed at his disposal. The next day he embarked on board H.I.M.S. *Prinz Adalbert*, and sailed for Valencia, where he was met by the German Ambassador, Count Solms, and Generals von Loë, Blanco and Salamanca. After attending a banquet given by the Captain-General of Valencia, the Prince resumed his journey, and reached Madrid about mid-day on November 23. King Alfonso met his royal guest at the station, and drove with him to the palace, amid the enthusiastic cheers of the crowd thronging the streets.

After a very pleasant fortnight, the Crown Prince took leave of the King and Queen, and set out for a short tour through Andalusia to Seville, Granada, Cordova and Tarragona. A week later the Prince embarked at Barcelona on the *Prinz Adalbert*, and returned to Genoa.

The cordial welcome extended to the Prince in Northern Italy was more than equalled at Rome, where the multitude could hardly be kept back by the troops lining the streets; though the distance from the station to the palace amounts to barely six furlongs, King Humbert and his guest took three-quarters of an hour to drive to their destination. After dinner the royalties were entertained at a fête given by the municipality at the Capitol, while the ruined Forum was brilliantly illuminated.

A visit was paid next day to the Vatican, where the Pope welcomed the Prince on the threshold of the antechamber, and invited him to enter his room. The interview, which lasted about three-quarters of an hour, turned chiefly on Spain, as the Crown Prince declined to discuss recent clerical appointments in Germany. The German Foreign Office had promised to send instructions regarding the attitude to be observed with reference to the Vatican; but as these did not arrive, the Crown Prince conducted the interview according to his own judgment. When Prince Bismarck read the Prince's report on his interview with the Pope, he remarked: 'His Royal Highness possesses every qualification of an Ambassador.'

The Crown Prince's visit to the Italian Court came to an end on December 20, and he returned to Berlin on the 23rd, after an absence of over a month.

The feelings evoked in Italy by the Prince's visit are well described by Count Cadorna, the President of the Italian Council, in a letter to the editor of the *Deutsche Revue*:

'The Italians admire his military talents and his noble spirit; they love him because they know him to

be a friend of our Royal House and a well-wisher to Italy herself.

‘Since the day on which he held our young Crown Prince in his arms on the balcony of the Quirinal, the nation regards him as something more than a foreign Prince, and cherishes the same sympathy for him as for our own Royal Family. Italy has not fallen into the error of considering the visit of His Royal and Imperial Highness more than an act of courtesy and sympathy towards our King on the part of the Emperor. But though nobody thinks that this visit has a political object, either in regard to Italy or the Vatican, the general opinion is that the political character and consequences, so intimately bound up with such acts of courtesy, cannot be separated from this visit under the prevailing circumstances.’

In April, 1884, King William, acting on the advice of Prince Bismarck, revived the Prussian State Council, founded in 1817, with the Crown Prince as President. This Council was designed not merely to influence the legislative measures to be laid before the Prussian Landtag, but also to enable the Prince to participate more closely in the policy of the Empire by means of the Prussian vote in the Federal Council. A former project of appointing the Prince to preside over the Prussian Ministry had to be abandoned, as it was impossible for a Prince of the Blood to assume the Parliamentary responsibilities connected with that post.

The State Council was opened on October 25, in the presence of some 100 members, by the Crown Prince, whose speech dealt solely with the duties devolving on the Council, and the discussion of the measures to be

laid before them. During the years 1884, 1885 and 1886 the Crown Prince attended the meetings regularly, and in connection therewith had frequent consultations with Prince Bismarck, who expressed his great appreciation of the manner in which the business of the Council was conducted.

Early in March, 1884, the mournful tidings of the Duke of Albany's sudden death summoned the Crown Prince to England to pay the last honours to his brother-in-law. The summer was spent in England, and after a tour of military inspections the Crown Prince and Princess visited the Tyrol in the autumn, before returning to Berlin.

On New Year's Day, 1885, the Crown Prince, with his two sons, paid a visit to the Imperial Chancellor and Princess Bismarck at his official residence in Berlin, and repeated the visit on April 1 to congratulate the great statesman on attaining his seventieth birthday. Owing to the continued ill-health of the Emperor and the approaching prospect of the succession, the Crown Prince one day asked the Chancellor whether he would continue in office under him. Prince Bismarck replied in the affirmative, but stipulated for two conditions : no government by Parliament, and no foreign influence in the policy of the Empire. With an expressive gesture of assent, the Crown Prince replied : 'Not to be thought of.'

Two heavy losses now fell in quick succession on the Crown Prince ; for only a few days after he had attended the funeral of one of his closest friends, Prince Charles Antony of Hohenzollern, at Sigmaringen, Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia breathed his last. In the Prince of Hohenzollern the Fatherland



mourned a true patriot, and in Prince Frederick Charles a leader whose military talents had been crowned with victory on many a hard-fought battlefield. Before the year closed, another friend of the Crown Prince—King Alfonso of Spain—passed away, a victim to consumption.

Amid the enthusiastic joy of his devoted subjects the Emperor William celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of his accession to the throne of Prussia on January 2, 1886. A few days later, on the 27th, the Crown Prince, in his turn, completed his twenty-fifth year of service as Statthalter of Pomerania.

In February the Crown Prince granted an audience to Pastors von Bodelschwingh and Cronenmeyer, who were engaged in promoting labour colonies in the vicinity of Bremerhaven, a matter in which the Prince took a deep interest. After Bodelschwingh had explained the details of the proposed colony, the Prince inquired how their finances stood. The pastors regretfully replied that 60,000 marks were wanted, and implored the Prince's support in placing their claims before the Minister of Agriculture. 'Oh, he has far more money than I have,' said the Prince; 'and though I am willing to put in a good word for you, I am rather inclined to think that you can make a beginning with a smaller sum.' The interview then closed with the parting remark from the Crown Prince that the accounts of the colony must be kept to a penny if the work was to be successful.

After an attack of measles in April, the Prince spent a few weeks at Homburg, and was sufficiently restored to health by May 23 to attend the opening of the Jubilee Art Exhibition in Berlin. A few weeks

later the Crown Prince represented the Emperor at the funeral of the ill-fated King of Bavaria, Louis II.

In September the Prince was present at the manœuvres near Strasburg before joining his family at Portofino, close to Genoa. The idyllic situation of this peaceful little village so charmed the Prince that he decided to return again the following year. In the meantime the political crisis in Berlin, where the question of increasing the peace establishment of the army and fixing the military budget for a period of seven years was hotly contested in the Reichstag, claimed his presence, and he accordingly returned to the Prussian capital in November.

New Year's Day, 1887, witnessed the unique jubilee of the Emperor's eightieth year of service in the Prussian Army. As the senior Field-Marshal, the Crown Prince headed the Prussian Generals in presenting the congratulations of the army. In his address the Prince emphasized the stability of the national development insured by the Prussian successes in war. 'The Prussian principle,' he continued, 'of making no discrimination between the people and the army, because they both are ready to defend the Fatherland at all times, has now become the common property of the nation, thanks to your Majesty's care. The weightiest pledge for the preservation of our peace lies in this readiness of our whole nation.'

In his reply the Emperor thanked the army for the expression of their devotion, and hoped to meet the commanders again in a year's time. But by that time the Crown Prince's health had given rise to the profoundest anxiety. During a drive with the King and Queen of Italy on the Riviera in the autumn of 1886

the Prince contracted a severe cold, and, as he himself remarked, his throat never recovered from the exposure.

In January, 1887, the hoarseness became intensified, and Surgeon-General Wagener was called in to treat the malady. The spirits of the royal patient suffered greatly from depression, and on one occasion he remarked to General von Schweinitz, who begged him not to give way to melancholy—the whole future belonged to him: ‘The future? No—that belongs to my son; my time has passed away.’ On another occasion he said to Pastor Cronenmeyer: ‘I am an old man; I stand with one foot in the grave.’

As the sufferings of the Crown Prince did not yield to treatment, Professor Gerhardt was called in, and found a suspicious thickening of the vocal ligament, for which he prescribed the repeated use of galvanic cautery. But since this remedy was also ineffectual, and even caused the growth to spread further over the larynx, the Crown Prince was advised to spend a few weeks quietly at Ems. Accompanied by his family, he set out for Ems on April 14; but his condition did not improve by the change of air, and the royal patient returned to Berlin after a month’s absence in worse health, if anything, than when he left. A consultation took place on May 18 between Doctors von Sauer, Tobold, Wagener, Schrader, Bergmann, and Gerhardt, and resulted in the recognition of the growth as undoubtedly malignant. It was further decided to perform an operation in order to examine the affected region of the throat before removing the growth. At that time, although so recent, the *technique* of such operations on the larynx had by no means reached

such a degree of perfection as it has to-day, and it was only natural that Professor Bergmann, before finally deciding to operate, should beg the Crown Princess to obtain the opinion of yet another eminent specialist on diseases of the throat. Amongst the names then submitted was that of the well-known English surgeon Morell Mackenzie, who was eventually requested to give an opinion.

Without rejecting the final diagnosis of the German doctors, Mackenzie proposed that the nature of the growth should be microscopically examined before the operation took place. A small portion of the growth was accordingly removed, and forwarded at once to Professor Virchow for examination.

Virchow reported that he was compelled to regard the growth as a mere thickening of the membrane (pachydermia), though the possibility existed that the deeper situated portions might be malignant. On the whole, the report was so favourable that the idea of an immediate operation was set aside, and Morell Mackenzie assumed the further treatment of the case, though it was arranged that another consultation with the German surgeons should take place shortly.

The report which emanated from England, that the Crown Prince on returning from Ems had renounced his right of succession to the Throne in favour of his son, is characterized as absolutely false by Prince Bismarck in his 'Reminiscences.' The fable that an incurable disease was a bar to succession, he declared, had not the slightest foundation either in the statutes of the House of Hohenzollern or in the Prussian Constitution.

Partly in order to conquer the feeling of depression

which at times came over him, the Crown Prince, acting on the advice of Dr. Mackenzie, left Berlin for England with his family on June 13, and settled for a short time in Upper Norwood. The Prince emerged from his seclusion to take part in the Jubilee Procession which escorted Queen Victoria from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey. It will be still in the memory of many how his manly figure, clad in the white uniform of the Pomeranian Cuirassiers, seen among the cavalcade of Princes which preceded the royal carriage, evoked more than mere enthusiasm from the crowds thronging every yard of the route taken by the procession.

After spending a fortnight at Norris Castle in the Isle of Wight, the Crown Prince proceeded to Braemar. But though the bulletins at times announced an improvement in his health, the British climate proved unsuitable, and he returned to Germany on September 14. On his way to Toblach, in the Puster Valley, he met Professor Virchow at Munich and repeated his thanks for the hopes inspired by the microscopical reports. The appointed consultation with the German surgeons did not take place, as, in view of the latest very favourable reports by Virchow, it was deemed unnecessary. To avoid the rigour of the German autumn, the Prince proceeded to Venice on September 28, from whence he wrote as follows to his old tutor, Professor Schellbach :

‘ My convalescence, though very slow, is in full swing, but as it can only be furthered by a milder autumn than that of Germany, the date of my return is still undecided. My English specialist is convinced that the real trouble is now overcome ; it is only necessary

to strengthen my health by avoiding speaking and catching cold, so that I may be able to return to my duties at home by the beginning of the winter.'

The Prince moved to Bavano on the Lago Maggiore on October 7, prior to taking up his winter-quarters on the Riviera. About this time a certain Frenchman, Ballardin by name, died leaving the whole of his fortune, valued at several million francs, to the Crown Prince. M. Ballardin appeared to have been so embittered by disputes with the French authorities that he determined to show his hatred and contempt for his native country by the novel means of bequeathing his property to the German Crown Prince, who, needless to say, declined to accept the legacy under such circumstances.

The alarming news that the growth was spreading was confirmed on November 6 by a consultation held at San Remo\* between Professor von Schroetter of Vienna, Dr. Moritz Schmidt of Frankfort, and Dr. Krausse of Berlin. Again the unanimous opinion was that the growth was undoubtedly malignant. The impression, however, created by the Crown Prince was by no means that of a heavily-stricken man, for beyond his marked hoarseness his outward appearance and demeanour had undergone no change.

The seriousness of his condition, however, was all the more acutely realized on the Prince asking Professor von Schroetter, 'Is it really cancer?' With the deepest emotion the surgeon replied to the effect that the Prince's days were numbered. Apart from the fact that the Crown Prince had repeatedly declared

\* The Crown Prince moved into the Villa Zirio at San Remo on November 4.

that he would not consent to an operation, the time had passed when favourable results might have been achieved by the aid of the surgeon's art. Such, at least, was the opinion of the medical authorities of the day.

A short pause, never forgotten by those who were present, followed this momentous reply before the Crown Prince turned to each of the doctors and conversed about personal matters. All his life long he had practised the strictest self-control, and now that he learnt the fatal character of his malady he was not found wanting in manly dignity and silent resignation to the iron laws of life and death. On the battlefields of Denmark, Austria, and France, in the death-chamber of the beloved children he had lost, the grave had lost its terrors, and he viewed his approaching end with Christian fortitude and obedience to the decrees of Providence.

It was decided that he should remain in the mild climate of the Riviera, and that no recourse should be had to the surgeon's knife until he felt a difficulty in breathing. As hitherto, the Prince remained under the care of Dr. Morell Mackenzie, assisted by Drs. Howell, Krausse, and Schrader.

No sooner had the news of the result of this consultation spread abroad than San Remo became the goal of thousands of pilgrims, who at times endeavoured to express their sympathy and devotion in the most extraordinary manner. Innumerable letters were received endeavouring to prove the diagnosis to be wrong and submitting some method or the other which could not fail to restore the Prince to health. Every nation of the civilized world was represented in



the demonstrations of affectionate sympathy which poured into San Remo to cheer the illustrious patient.

To all outward appearances the condition of the Crown Prince had benefited immensely by his stay on the Riviera, as he regained his voice to a certain extent, besides being able to undertake long walks, whilst his appetite left little to be desired. In reply to a telegraphic address of sympathy from the Reichstag on November 24, he wrote :

‘I sincerely thank the Reichstag for the expression of their sympathy with me in my illness. It has greatly rejoiced my heart, like so many other manifestations of true devotion from every class of the nation and from every part of the Empire. With God’s help, I hope that I shall be permitted, by the improvement in my condition already noticeable, due to the stay in this Southern air, to resume my duties to the Fatherland to the fullest extent.

‘FREDERICK WILLIAM, Crown Prince.’

The health of the aged Emperor, already ninety-one years old, now called for the appointment of Prince William as his grandfather’s assistant in the current business of the Military and Civil Cabinet. But when Prince Bismarck wished to go a step further, and proposed that the young Prince should be more deeply initiated into the affairs of the State, the Emperor declined the proposal, as he feared that such a step might cause pain to the Crown Prince.

Meanwhile the time passed uneventfully at San Remo. Following the course of Germany’s domestic and foreign policy with the deepest interest, the

Prince closely scrutinized every action of the Government, and devoted the same amount of time to work as he had been accustomed to do at Potsdam.

A letter written about this period by the Crown Princess contains the following passage :

‘ We are undergoing a time of heavy trial, but the feeling that the nation has not forgotten us, that it hopes and feels with us, is an everlasting source of comfort and joy. If God so wills it, this confidence will remain the Crown Prince’s most treasured possession in the future, and be his greatest aid in the attainment of pure ideals.

‘ Who can tell how many days may still be granted to him ? But when one sees him so fresh and vigorous, one can only trust to his strength and good constitution in the belief that his health will not fail him in the execution of his duties, though even under the most favourable circumstances he will have to spare himself, and use his voice as little as possible.’

Owing to the sad news of the Crown Prince’s health, nearly all the winter festivities in Berlin were cancelled. As soon as the Prince heard of this, he expressed the hope that the people of Berlin would not abandon their customary merrymaking owing to his illness, which threatened to be protracted. But the Berliners had no heart for festivals and dancing when their Prince was vainly seeking health in a foreign country.

Christmas had come at last, and the Prince’s household celebrated the festival as usual with a Christmas-tree, or rather two, as a number of German farmers had sent a second tree from the Black Forest, ‘ to give the Crown Prince a breath of German air.’

At eight o'clock on Christmas Eve the members of the household assembled in the large room which opens on to the balcony of the Villa Zirio, and were joined by Lady Ponsonby and her daughters, as well as Count Launay, the Italian Ambassador at Berlin, who had brought a magnificent silver centrepiece and some beautiful jewels for the Crown Princess as presents from the King and Queen of Italy. Shortly after the Prince and his family had appeared to greet their guests, the folding-doors opened and an ocean of light flooded the room. Two tall fir-trees, studded with tapers, glistened with decorations, while the room itself had been converted into a garden of flowers : roses of every hue, cornucopias of camellias, violets, geraniums, and lilies of the valley transformed the room into a fairy bower.

The Christmas gifts had been heaped up on tables in the centre of the room, and with touching kindness the Crown Prince led his guests to the places where their presents had been piled up. Again and again he expressed his gratitude and deep appreciation of the loving sympathy of those who had sought to cheer him in his hour of trouble.

Towards the end of January the Prince felt a difficulty in breathing, which increased so rapidly that an operation to facilitate the passage of air had to be undertaken by Dr. Bramann at almost a moment's notice. Though the operation was entirely successful, the wound did not heal as quickly as might have been expected from the Prince's magnificent constitution. For some time all speaking was out of the question, and considerable difficulty was encountered in the matter of nourishment. The confinement to his room,

moreover, told greatly on the spirits of the Crown Prince.

It was then that the Prince penned the following lines to Pastor Persius in Potsdam :

‘ You are right in speaking of patience and resignation, for without thus resigning one’s self to Divine dispensations, it would not be easy to lead the life that is now imposed on me. I am, it is true, supported by the most loving care of my wife and surrounded by my children ; but to remain away from home for so long, having regard to the advanced age of the Emperor and all the dangers that winter may bring him, is no small burden, especially since I am constantly reminded that this or that must not be done out of consideration for my health. I often look into that book [Thomas à Kempis’ “Imitation of Christ”] which contains sentences that seem to have been written for such cases as mine, and which offer rare consolation and support.’

The news of his son’s relapse had a terrible effect on the aged Emperor, whose days were now drawing to an end. A chill, which settled on the kidneys, confined him to his bed towards the end of February, and on March 9, 1888, the first German Emperor passed peacefully away amidst the mourning of the whole nation. As the imperial standard sank slowly to half-mast high over the royal palace, the church bells of the capital tolled a parting knell to the passing away of the founder of United Germany.

On the morning of that fatal March day, the Crown Prince was walking in the garden of the Villa Zirio, when a telegram was brought to him on a salver. Mechanically, and without a suspicion of the contents,

the Crown Prince took up the message and read the address: 'To His Majesty the German Emperor Frederick William.' Laying the telegram back on the salver unopened, he burst into tears, and with difficulty forced himself to composure before reading the news of his father's death.

The question then arose as to whether the Emperor Frederick would be sufficiently strong to return to Germany, and, if so, how the long and fatiguing journey was to be carried out. The matter was, however, quickly settled by the Emperor's decision to return home at once and assume his new duties without delay.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE EMPEROR'S LAST DAYS

1888

RARELY if ever has the accession of a monarch to a throne taken place under such tragic circumstances as when Frederick III. was called upon to wield supreme power during the last months of his life. The long-hoped-for opportunity for carrying out his cherished plans for the good of the Fatherland, as well as the carefully elaborated social schemes which had engrossed the whole life of the new Emperor, were fated to fall as a magnificent inheritance into the hands of his son. The experiences, knowledge, and labour of so many years were doomed to vanish into the silence of the grave before the brief space of time still remaining could be utilized to its full extent.

Early in the morning of March 10, the Emperor, accompanied by his family, set out for Berlin, and was met the following day at Leipzig by the Ministry. Prince Bismarck was the first to greet his new master, who embraced him with warmth and kissed him on the cheek. At Berlin, where a ceremonial reception had been forbidden, the Imperial couple were met by

Crown Prince William and driven in a closed carriage to Charlottenburg.

On the evening of the 12th the *Reichsanzeiger* published an Imperial proclamation to the nation, and the following rescript to the Chancellor :

‘MY DEAR PRINCE,

‘On my accession to the Throne, I feel obliged to turn to you, the first servant, so well proven by many years, of my father now resting with God. You are the loyal and courageous adviser who gave form to the objects of his policy and secured their successful execution.

‘I am, and my House remains, pledged to you in warm gratitude.

‘You therefore, before all, have a right to know the maxims which are to regulate the conduct of my government.

‘The constitutional and legal ordinances of the Empire and Prussia must, above all, be founded on the reverence and customs of the nation. So far as possible the changes must be avoided which are caused by alterations in the institutions of State and in legislation.

‘In promoting the tasks of the Imperial Government, the firm foundations, on which the Prussian State has hitherto rested securely, must be left untouched.

‘In the Empire the constitutional rights of all the Federal Governments must be as conscientiously respected as those of the Reichstag ; but from both a similar respect for the rights of the Emperor must be expected. Herein the aim must be kept in view that these mutual rights only serve to promote the public



weal, which remains the supreme law, and that new, undoubtedly national requirements must always be complied with to the fullest extent.

‘For the necessary and most secure pledge of the undisturbed development of these tasks, I look to the undiminished maintenance of the defensive strength of the country, my proven army and the flourishing navy, on whom grave duties have fallen by the acquisition of foreign possessions. Both must at all times be maintained at the height of training and at the perfection of organization on which their fame is based, and which insures their future powers of action.

‘I am resolved to carry on the government of the Empire and Prussia with a scrupulous regard to the constitutional principles of the Empire and the country. My predecessors on the Throne, wisely recognising the inevitable requirements and the difficult tasks of social and political life, formulated these principles, which must everywhere be respected in order that their virtue and beneficent effect may be realized.

‘I desire that the principle of religious toleration, observed by my House for centuries, shall continue to protect all my subjects, no matter what community or creed they belong to. Each one of them is equally near to my heart; they all showed their complete loyalty to the same degree in the days of danger.

‘In agreement with the views of my Imperial father, I shall warmly support all efforts which aim at improving the economic welfare of the various classes of society, mediating between conflicting interests, and alleviating as far as possible unavoidable hardships, yet without evoking the expectation that it is possible to end all social evils by the action of the State.

‘I regard the care devoted to the education of youth as intimately connected with all social problems. If, on the one hand, higher education must be made available to ever-increasing circles, on the other hand, the serious dangers created by incomplete education, the awakening of desires in life which the economic resources of the nation cannot satisfy, and the neglect of educational tasks by the one-sided striving after increased knowledge, must be avoided.

‘Only the race that grows up in the healthy atmosphere of the fear of God and of simple customs can possess sufficient powers of resistance to conquer the dangers which, in times of rapid economic development, are placed in the way of the community by the example of the luxurious life led by individuals. It is my desire that no opportunity be missed of opposing in the public service the temptation to disproportionate expenditure.

‘My impartial consideration is assured to every proposed financial reform, provided that the old proven thriftiness of Prussia is unable to prevent the imposition of fresh burdens and to lead to a diminution of the demands hitherto made.

‘I consider the self-government conferred on the larger and smaller communities in the State to be beneficial. Yet I draw attention as to whether the right, bestowed on these communities, of imposing taxation, which they use without sufficient heed being paid to simultaneous taxation by the Empire and the State, may not bear too heavily on individuals.

‘In the same way, it must be considered whether a simplification in the official hierarchy may not be

advisable, by which a diminution in the number of officials would permit their salaries to be raised.

‘If success is achieved in firmly maintaining the foundations of State and social life, it will give me especial pleasure to fully develop the vigour which German art and science so richly shows.

‘In effecting these my aims I reckon on your devotion, so often proved, and on the support of your wide experience.

‘May it be granted to me to lead Germany and Prussia to fresh honours in peaceful development, aided by the harmonious co-operation of the officers of the Empire, the devotion of the national representatives as well as officials, and by the trusting support of all classes of the population.

‘Untouched by the brilliance of deeds of glory, I shall be content if in times to come it can be said of my government that it was of benefit to my nation, of service to my country, and a blessing to the Empire.

‘FREDERICK III.

‘BERLIN,

‘*March 12, 1888.*’

This rescript was handed to Prince Bismarck during the railway journey from Leipzig, and was published in exact accordance with the Emperor's draft save in one point: the Emperor had originally written, ‘the first fellow-workman of my father,’ but the Chancellor begged that the word ‘servant’ might be substituted. Another point of interest is the signature attached to the rescript—‘Frederick III.’—since the addition of the numeral is not in accordance with monarchical tradition. It appears that the initials ‘I’ and ‘R,’ as written by

the Emperor, were mistaken by the printers for the Roman numeral 'III.'

The publication of the rescript was in many ways a severe blow to those who had hoped for the establishment of Parliamentary party government in Germany and Prussia. Force of circumstances prevented the Emperor from realizing the programme he had marked out in the rescript, which hence rather resembled a political testament—the expression of his most earnest thoughts and aims.

On the removal of the mortal remains of William I. from the Berlin Cathedral to the mausoleum at Charlottenburg, the Emperor wrote to Count Moltke :

‘Remain to me what you were to my father—a friend, a confidant, a heroic adviser in all that concerned the welfare of the army.

‘I heartily implore you to restrict your participation in to-morrow’s mournful ceremony to being present in the Cathedral. Should you not be content with this, I command you to do so; you will not bear so old and loyal a friend a grudge.’

To Count von Blumenthal he wrote as follows :

‘In hereby promoting you General Field-Marshal, my desire is that the world should recognise that the first bestowal by me of the highest rank in our army is to the man who was my adviser during the decisive and great campaigns of the last decade.’

At the same time the Emperor sent him his own *baton* to use until a new one could be made.

It was with the greatest difficulty that the Empress, aided by the urgent advice of the physicians, induced her husband to abstain from following his father’s body to the last resting-place on March 16. In the evening

his mother, despite her failing health, came to Charlottenburg to see her dearly-loved son once more. Their meeting was most affecting; the Emperor knelt at his mother's knee, laid his weary head in her lap, and wept with her for the heavy loss they had sustained.

Now that he was again hard at work, the Emperor's health seemed to improve; he regained his appetite, and at times even ventured to speak in a whisper. Unfortunately, the bitterly cold weather and frequent falls of snow confined him to the palace.

Prince Bismarck thus describes his relations with Frederick III. :

‘At the time of his government I was always on the best of terms with the Emperor Frederick and his consort, the Empress Victoria. Any differences of opinion between us were discussed with Their Majesties in the most friendly way. The Empress Victoria is, moreover, very clever and decided. When I appeared with some business for her imperial consort, she frequently entered the sick-room before me to prepare him and gain him over for my project.

‘In the Battenberg affair the Emperor Frederick was completely on my side from the very beginning, as well by political as by personal—I might say majestic—reasons. Since Frederick the Great, no Hohenzoller has ever been animated and inspired by so “Olympic” a feeling of majesty as he was. And if he had ruled longer, the Extreme Liberals would have been greatly surprised and disillusioned by the energy and indignation with which the Emperor and King would have met their plan of a “truly constitutional government,” *i.e.*, the diminution of his prerogative

rights and the conduct of his government under the tutelage of Liberalism. His exalted feeling of dignity and majesty was opposed to the marriage of a Princess of his House with a scion of a mere branch of a German princely family, such as the Battenberger was. It seemed an absolutely impossible misalliance to the Emperor Frederick, and he therefore opposed the project. For this purpose he demanded from me that I should embody the political objections to the marriage in a memorial.

‘In compliance with this order, I adduced the following facts in that memorial: The Bulgarians would at once remove their present Prince, Ferdinand of Coburg, and recall Prince Alexander of Battenberg, as soon as he had married a daughter of the German Emperor. But that would bring about a complete change in the existing policy of Germany towards Bulgaria. Hitherto Germany, so long as it was only a question of Bulgaria—as I had already explained in my speech in the Reichstag on February 6, 1888—was completely neutral and uninterested, and this uninterestedness alone offered Germany a handle, and enabled her to preserve the full confidence of the two most interested Governments, opposed to each other in the Bulgarian question, Russia and Austria-Hungary.

‘With one blow this confidence would be destroyed for years, if not for ever, if the Battenberger, the Czar’s most hated opponent, become the son-in-law of the German Emperor. Germany would thenceforth be obliged to take a share in the Bulgarian affair if a Princess of the German Imperial House became Princess of Bulgaria. It would be just as if one were

to throw a Field-Marshal's *baton* over the wall of a hostile fortress; it would have to be fetched out under any circumstances and at all costs.

'Owing to these and his own "Olympic" considerations, the Emperor finally decided to abandon the project.'

In another conversation Prince Bismarck again alluded to the Emperor :

'The Emperor Frederick was indeed a very remarkable and estimable man, extremely amiable and friendly, yet none the less far-sighted, intelligent and decided. He knew himself thoroughly, and a resolve once taken remained unalterable. Had he lived longer as German Emperor, he would have astonished the world by his energy and personal action in the government. His views about his duty towards his subjects and the duty of his subjects towards their ruler were sharply defined and unalterable. He was a genuine Hohenzoller of the best kind and most brilliant capacity. His courage was indeed something heroic. He resembled his noble father in his kind politeness and gentle consideration for his servants. Let me give you a touching example of this amiable trait of character.

'During the last days of his illness, whilst he was still able to receive me sitting fully dressed on the sofa, he never omitted accompanying me to the door of his room, and opening it himself to let me out on taking my departure. One day, as he was walking with me through the room, I noticed that he was shaking with pain and weakness, and had already stretched out my arm, as I thought he was about to fall, when he managed to seize the door-knob and steadied himself.



Yet he uttered no complaint and bore his pains in manly silence. To the very last he displayed a noble appreciation of imperial dignity and composure of soul. Nothing could shake his self-control or make him lose spirit; to his last breath he was every inch an Emperor.'

Towards the end of April the Ministry received an order from the Emperor to submit a proposal for the Crown Prince to take an even greater share in the Government than that originally granted him on March 21. On the proposal being placed before the Emperor for signature, he caused the powers entrusted to his son to be still further increased.

A brief visit from the Queen of England at this period to the Imperial Court deeply affected the Emperor and his sorely tried consort.

The health of the illustrious patient had improved so much that he was now able to drive out in a pony-carriage through the Charlottenburg Park, and on May 23 he ventured to drive to Berlin and visit his mother. On the following day he attended the marriage of his second son, Prince Henry, with Princess Irene of Hesse.

On May 29, for the last time, the Emperor attended a military parade at Charlottenburg and watched the Crown Prince manœuvring his brigade.

The beautiful mild spring weather now turned the Emperor's thoughts to his much-loved Potsdam residence, which he had renamed Friedrichskron, and after a last visit to the mausoleum he proceeded to Potsdam on board the yacht *Alexandra*.

In the meantime a political event of great importance had taken place by the dismissal of Herr von

Puttkamer, the Minister of the Interior. In passing a vote of censure on the Minister on May 2, the Chamber demanded that the Government should observe the provisions of the law forbidding any pressure from being brought to bear on the elections. To this Herr von Puttkamer replied by asserting that the Prussian administration was subject to no control, and thus appealed, as it were, to the Emperor, who at that time was about to give his assent to a Bill prolonging the legislative period to five years. He returned the Bill with his signature to Puttkamer on the 27th, and at the same time demanded that 'the liberty of future elections should not be restricted by official pressure.' Bismarck was most anxious that a rupture should not take place between the Emperor and his friend Puttkamer, and eventually succeeded in effecting this object. But in the meantime the Minister of the Interior had managed again to excite the wrath of the Emperor, by forbidding the students to perform a Lutheran play, on the ground that it endangered 'religious peace.' In obedience to a direct order from the Emperor, Herr von Puttkamer had to withdraw the prohibition after the objectionable passages had been struck out. In an autograph letter to the Minister, the Emperor repeated his high disapproval of many incidents of former elections, whereupon Herr von Puttkamer at once handed in his resignation. The energy which the Emperor displayed in this matter again clearly indicated the active share he would have taken in the Government had his health permitted it.

The sufferings of the Emperor increased greatly

during the last weeks ; his temperature often rose to fever heat, and want of breath forced him to pass several nights in an easy-chair. Even the strongest constitution was no armour against the insidious and constant progress of his disease. On the night of June 7 the doctor on duty observed symptoms which pointed to the growth breaking in the throat. Yet with heroic fortitude the moribund Emperor insisted on greeting the King of Sweden on the garden terrace. A few days later his condition became most serious, and his bodily strength was fast ebbing away. As his daughter Sophie came to his bedside on the 13th to receive his congratulations on her birthday, he wrote on a piece of paper the following touching message : 'Continue to be pious and good, as you have been till now ; this is the last wish of your dying father.'

In the afternoon the Emperor took leave of Prince Bismarck. Seizing the great statesman by both hands, he gazed earnestly into his eyes, and then placed the hand of the Empress in the Chancellor's right hand, silently entrusting her future to him.

At one o'clock the next morning he asked Dr. Hovell : 'How is my pulse ? are you satisfied with it ?' As dawn broke the Emperor's condition became worse, and every breath had to be fought for, yet to the last he remained conscious and clasped the hand of his devoted wife.

Shortly after eleven the Emperor passed peacefully away.

The first message written by the widowed Empress after she had regained the mastery of her grief

announced the mournful tidings to the Empress Augusta :

‘ She who was so proud and happy to be the wife of your only son mourns with you, poor mother. No mother ever had such a son. Be strong and proud in your grief. Even this morning he sent you a greeting.

‘ VICTORIA.’

The mortal remains of Frederick III. were laid to rest in the Friedenskirche at Potsdam, on June 18, amid the heartfelt grief of the German nation. As the mournful procession returned, a last greeting was borne out into the air through the deathlike silence of the church : ‘ Behold, blessed are they who have suffered.’

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